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ABSTRACT

Detailed interviews with immigrant students in the California school system indicate that the schools are not meeting the challenge of providing these students with an education adequate to prepare them to be productive members of American society. The first section presents demographic data and background information on immigrant children and their immigration experience. The second section reviews the content and structure of school programs, describes the school experience of immigrant children, and presents data on the achievement and school success of immigrant students. The final section offers suggestions for steps to be taken at the state, local, school site, and community levels to create a more adequate school experience for immigrant children. Appendices include the interview guide used in this study and a bibliography with 134 references. (SKW)

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Immigrant Students and the California Public Schools

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Crossing the Schoolhouse Border



A California Tomorrow Policy Research Report

CROSSING THE SCHOOLHOUSE BORDER

Immigrant Students and the California Public Schools

A California Tomorrow Policy Research Report

by
Laurie Olsen, Project Director
Immigrant Students and the Schools Project

with Research Assistance by Marcia T. Chen

1988

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The project contracted with Minicucci Associates to analyze several state data bases on immigrant students in the higher education system, demographics, funding, and drop-out and attrition information. As the project proceeded, we came to increasingly rely on Catherine Minicucci's intelligent research capability, political sophistication and good advice on many other phases of the project as well. Her contribution was significant. We are also indebted to Adrienne Downey of Minicucci Associates for the painstaking task of data entry for all the student interviews.

This research project was not just the effort of its staff and consultants, but is truly the product of a whole organization. California Tomorrow Fellows, staff and volunteers all pitched in and helped with the public hearings and at critical points in the field data collection and report production. We particularly want to acknowledge the efforts of California Tomorrow Fellows Betty Noling, Vera deVera, Rhonda Trotter and Lucinda Wong, and Research Associate Judy Malunda. Debbie Wenzel and Soledad Ellis not only provided support whenever needed, but managed to keep smiling when the pressure from our project overflowed into the offices. Vinh Hoang handled the endless detailed work of assembling and maintaining our mailing list, and gave invaluable computer expertise whenever called upon. Bruce Kelley gave of his time, advice, perspective, and editorial sensibilities whenever asked, which was frequently. As President of California Tomorrow, Lew Butler established the visionary context for the project and continued to remind us through comments on drafts and in meetings of the important connections between our project and the wider realm of California's future. Two volunteers helped enormously — Sheana Butler who assisted in the task of pulling and organizing quotes from the student interviews, and Caragh Kennedy who worked on the Los Angeles public hearing. The Board of Directors of California Tomorrow has been supportive of this project from the start, and all reviewed the draft of this report. As their representative, Hugo Morales became involved in the project at several crucial points when we needed the specific support of the Board. We are grateful to him for the amount of time he took and the invaluable perspective he provided.

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California Tomorrow is a member organization of the National Coalition of Advocates for Students (NCAS). We embarked on our Immigrant Students Project at the same time NCAS began a national study on the issue. The two organizations were joint sponsors of public hearings in San Francisco and Los Angeles. The project staff of both organizations commented on each other's drafts of findings, and provided important analytical and factual input. The result has been a true collaborative effort—with the reports being released simultaneously. We feel fortunate to have worked with the NCAS staff on this endeavor, and want specifically to mention Joan First, John Willshire-Carrera, Sara Garcia and John Kellogg.

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We are particularly grateful to the Walter S. Johnson Foundation and the Rosenberg Foundation for providing the funding for this project.

I took on this project, to which I was deeply committed and responsible, while at the same time mothering two small children. My personal thanks and love to those who made this possible: Mike Margulis, Jesse and Joshua Olsen, Molly Sullivan, Judy Margulis, Jack and Tillie Olsen, Julie Edwards, Jeff Kessel and Rebekah Edwards.

Finally, to the hundreds of students we interviewed for this project, our heartfelt thanks. It is our deepest hope that this report speaks accurately and passionately for you, and results in a school system that helps realize your dreams.

Laurie Olsen
Project Director

California is changing. A rainbow of faces, a multitude of languages fill the classrooms of California's public schools, providing a preview of our future society—a preview not to be ignored. The historically rich diversity of the state's population is only becoming more so—largely due to immigration. About 5.3 million Californians—20% of the state's population—are foreign born. The past decade has seen the largest migration ever to the state, primarily from Asia and Latin America. All projections indicate that this trend will continue, and that soon after the turn of the century there will be no single majority ethnic group in California. As we change, so too must our public institutions and policies to support our diversity, meet the different needs of all our residents, and prepare us all to function productively and equitably in a pluralistic society. California has a golden opportunity to pioneer such a society. The consequences for failing to do so are severe—for the individual newcomers to our state, and for all Californians as a people.

California's changing face is visible in the workplaces, streets and communities of the state. But no where is California's changed population more prevalent than in the public schools—and no where is the need to acknowledge the changes more critical. We estimate that one in six children in the public schools statewide is an immigrant; with more than a third of a million recently arrived newcomers. In some school districts as many as 80% are limited- or non-English speakers. In one third of the districts in the state at least one in ten students is limited English proficient. Immigrant children are not a fringe element of our student population—they are a large and increasing core part of our schools and future society. But most academic programs sadly ignore this reality.

California Tomorrow is a statewide organization established out of a commitment to California's future and the belief that the diverse population of the state is a great asset. Working to analyze the economic, political and social implications of the population changes in our state, California Tomorrow recognized early on that a major focus of the organization needed to be on the education of children. In 1986, the Immigrant Students and the Schools Project was launched to study the social and educational experiences of immigrant children, as well as how the schools are meeting the challenges these children bring them.

Important studies have evaluated the effect of children's ethnicity, language and poverty on their educational needs and experiences, but until now nothing has specifically addressed immigrant children. We collected what information existed, but were shocked by the lack of a data base at the state and local levels. Clearly a major study was in order that would emphasize the first-hand experiences of immigrant students *and* their educators to discern policy recommendations that assure the children's rights to an education. Our response was to go into 33 California communities and conduct 360 structured in-depth interviews with immigrant students, aged 11-18. We asked about their backgrounds in their native lands, the immigration experience, their adjustment to schools here in the United States and their perspective on educational needs.

Eleven trained interviewers, each fluent in the language of the children assigned to them, conducted the interviews. Some of the interviews were conducted in Spanish, in Cantonese, in Cambodian, etc.; others in English; still others in a combination of languages. Students, identified for us through the schools and community agencies, were assured confidentiality and the option of not answering any questions they considered intrusive or risky. Our experience, however, was that most were gratified by the opportunity to at last talk about their experiences.

Many of the conversations continued for more than an hour — far beyond the formal structured interviews.

We also talked to close to a hundred teachers and school program coordinators who poured out ideas, expertise and frustrations about creating a school system responsive to the needs of newcomer children. In immigrant communities we interviewed almost a hundred social workers, community advocates and youth workers. For two long days of public hearings co-hosted by the National Coalition of Advocates for Students in Los Angeles and San Francisco we heard a parade of 55 education experts and practitioners, parents and community advocates speak about the needs of immigrant children, the barriers faced in the schools, and the quiet successes of locally developed programs, services and supports. We read every article, evaluation report and book we could lay our hands on relevant to the topic. (For a full description of the Research Design and copy of the Student Interview Guide, see Appendices 1 and 2 of this report.) A picture began to emerge.

We found that the number of immigrant children in the public schools has increased two and a half times in the past decade and is expected to continue to grow at a rate of 5-7% each year over the next decade. The great majority of these students are enrolled in school programs which are woefully unprepared and inadequate to address their needs. Most receive insufficient English language instruction to participate meaningfully in an English taught curriculum, and little if any support or instruction in their native languages. The result is a huge academic gap between immigrant students and their U.S.-born, English-speaking peers. We found most school districts overwhelmed by the sudden changes in their student populations and scrambling to develop programs and approaches that might work; others seemed oblivious or stubbornly refusing to recognize that changes in staffing, curriculum and program structure might be in order.

Most programs for immigrant children have fallen under the rubric of the state's Bilingual Education Program. There, all under the name of bilingual education, a multitude of programs, approaches and supports are available, differing in their philosophy, intensity, staffing and materials. The lack of experience of many local educators with this population, and the scarcity of resources for new curricula and training have sometimes led school sites to being overwhelmed by the task at hand. Implementation of programs is tremendously uneven (from district to district, school site to school site and classroom to classroom), depending on the commitment of staff to the goals of bilingual education, the political atmosphere, staffing problems, knowledge of the research about how to serve immigrant children, the strength or weakness of district coordination, and the resources a district is willing or able to put into the program.

Almost all districts cite major problems in finding enough trained bilingual teachers — and only one in five students who should be served in bilingual programs actually is taught by trained bilingual certified staff. Appropriate assessment and placement is crucial to the education of immigrant children, but while some districts were found to have comprehensive intake systems which serve as national models, most have shockingly inadequate ones. Inappropriate placements of children are common, and result in negative attitudes and attachment to school, higher drop out rates, achievement problems and barriers to social integration.

Immigrant children are a population at risk in our schools, most critically those students who immigrate in their middle school or high school years. Yet the majority of school programs

leave immigrant students to sink or swim virtually on their own. Some swim, and their hard work and high achievements are amazing and inspiring to many — infuriating and threatening to others. We found many, many immigrant students working incredibly hard at their studies, with tremendous pressure from their families and their own high expectations to excel as the key to making a good life in the United States. But the majority, hard as they may work, have great difficulty in school, particularly those suffering war trauma, those from rural and more isolated areas, those with little family support or educational background, and those who are undocumented. We found many immigrant students frustrated and lost, convinced they could never catch up with their peers and either dropping out of school altogether or maintaining a marginal connection to school.

In addition to facing academic frustrations, we found among the immigrant children overwhelmingly common experiences of harassment, intimidation and violence against them due to accent, foreign dress, use of native language or “newcomer” behavior. We recorded the confusion, ambivalence and stresses immigrant teens feel in developing a sense of self identity and esteem which bridges two cultures, two languages and two nations.

We listened to a Cambodian boy speak in whispers about nightmares he has every night reliving the murder of his parents and years of hunger in refugee camps before coming to the United States. We heard a Chinese-born girl speak with tears in her eyes at a public hearing about the violence, harassment and hostility she experienced in her first few years in U.S. schools. We met a girl from Mexico who made it through the 11th grade but wouldn't be able to graduate from high school because her undocumented father was being deported. We discovered the tenacity and determination of children who carry well-worn dictionaries in their pockets to look up all the English words they don't understand in the conversations around them. We found students staying up late into the night to study in an effort to catch up with their U.S.-born peers — and we also found children unable to do their schoolwork because they were needed to take care of siblings or work to help out their families. Parents spoke to us with concern about children becoming involved in gangs and dropping out of school.

While this project focused on immigrant students, what we found has serious implications for all students and their futures. We came face to face with the intolerance and lack of understanding many U.S.-born children have about people different from themselves — and with the tendency for that intolerance to be expressed through violence and harassment. We saw how narrow much of the school curriculum can be, and how many of the school structures and approaches work to undermine the ability of our children to function in a world of diversity.

In addition to the barriers faced by immigrant children by virtue of being foreign born, we also found evidence of the challenges facing them as a result of minority-group membership here in the United States. Many immigrant children are also of low socio-economic status families, with problems of poverty compounding the challenge presented by being a minority and being foreign born.

The picture is not all bleak. Newcomers bring with them an excitement, optimism and tremendous energy for building a new life here in the United States. The project found educators who do recognize the resources brought by immigrants, and the importance of the demographic shift in their student populations, and who have put the best of their energies into pioneering new approaches for educating and nurturing immigrant children. We walked into schools and saw the excitement that results when truly integrated and diverse groups of children

learn from each other and alongside each other. The far-sighted superintendent, an unusually responsive and caring principal, a deeply committed teacher, an outspoken community advocate — these are the forces that have shaped the development of new program models and approaches which directly speak to the needs, hopes and concerns of immigrant children. Some have become well-known nationally for their groundbreaking efforts; most are unknown beyond the circle of students and staff whose lives have been affected by their work. Undoubtedly there are more excellent people and programs we failed to find. At the end of each chapter in this report we have listed some of the outstanding programs and contacts we came across.

These pockets of hope established a vision of what can be. But we found them operating with scarce resources and in the tense midst of political debates about immigration and bilingual education that made embracing the needs of immigrant children and the implementation of good programs difficult.

The law demands that we provide an equitable education for the foreign-born child. But the urgency to respond goes beyond that. Our labor force of tomorrow will be largely made up of these immigrants and their children. The future health of our economy is dependent upon educating them with the skills, language capability and knowledge to be fulfilled, productive members of our state. California's emerging economic role in the Pacific Rim and other international arenas demands greater bilingualism and global perspectives among our people. What the business leaders are defining as a direction for the economy and our state has yet to be translated into the design of school programs to educate people to fill the roles to take us in that direction.

California has a choice for its public schools. We can continue to blunder along — with some pockets of hope for the education and future of immigrant children, but with most schools inadequate to the task forcing us to respond to failures in hindsight. Or we can see this as a challenge and an opportunity.

This report is meant to help California seize the opportunity and accept the challenge. It focuses on the experiences of immigrant children in the public schools, and on the issues facing our schools in serving a new population. The first major section, "Children of the New California," presents demographic data and background information on immigrant children and their immigration experience. The second major section, "The Challenge Facing Our Schools" reviews the content and structure of school programs, describes the school experiences of immigrant children, and presents data on the achievements and school success of immigrant students. The "Conclusions and Recommendations" section offers suggestions for steps that can be taken at the state, local, school site and community level to create a school experience more responsive to the needs of immigrant children and to the future of our state.

The project does not end with this report. The report, in fact, is just a beginning. California Tomorrow is committed to working with policymakers, educators and community groups to utilize our research findings to strengthen public policies and approaches for immigrant children. Whether this information is utilized to move us in a direction of accepting the challenge is

up to all of us. California is at a crossroads. We can either say to the newcomers in our midst, we accept you provisionally to the extent you can re-create yourselves into a standard American mold—or we can say we welcome you as full members of our state and accept that we as a people have a new richness and diversity which requires new forms of public institutions to celebrate and support that diversity while uniting us as a state. We can work to ensure that our schools become vehicles for educating newcomers into productive and participating members of our society, or we can leave it to chance whether or not immigrants develop the skills and language capabilities needed to enhance the social and economic future of California.

Which way shall we go?

"Before I came to America I had dreams of life here. I thought about tall Anglos, big buildings, and houses with lawns. I was surprised when I arrived to see so many kinds of people — Black people, Asians. I found people from Korea and Cambodia and Mexico. In California I found not just America, I found the world."

Mexican immigrant student



The faces of California's population reflect the rest of the world more than they do the rest of the nation. With people from all over the globe and a wonderfully diverse ethnic and racial representation, the dominant fact is California is a multi-racial and multi-cultural society and will be even more so in the near future when everyone will be a member of an ethnic minority group. These changes are largely due to recent immigration of an unprecedented scale. One fourth of all immigrants to the United States now settle in California. And in the past decade immigration was responsible for close to half of the state's growth (see Table 1).

The ethnic origins of immigrants to California has also shifted markedly. Twenty years ago, the majority came from Europe, but by the 1980 Census, almost half came from the Americas and another quarter from Asia. Higher fertility rates and more rapid immigration among these groups will cause their share of the state's younger residents to climb sharply. San Francisco's Chinese community is the largest ethnic Chinese population outside Asia; Los Angeles' Mexican population is second only to Mexico City's. Over 20% of the state's residents — an estimated 5.3 million — are foreign born, the majority arriving since 1970.

This study is concerned with the experiences and educational needs of immigrant children in California's public schools, and the impact and implications for the schools of the increasing immigrant student population. We include in this group all foreign-born children — "refugees" and "immigrants," terms used interchangeably by some, restrictively by others. While many of the issues discussed in this report apply to all language minority children or to all ethnic minorities in the United States, our research thrust has been to specifically focus on the foreign-born child.

"The first responsibility of a school district is the maintenance of statistics which allow us to understand the demographic trends relative to the entire district, and the impact that immigrants have on the entire district."

Ramon Cortines, Superintendent
San Francisco Unified School District

We estimate at least 16% of California's public school-age children are foreign-born immigrants.

Ideally, the state would have specific, comprehensive data on the numbers and enrollment of immigrant children in the schools. It does not exist. Our method of calculating the number of immigrant students and where they live is based upon a modification of the Language Census count of Limited English Proficient status children, taking into consideration estimates of the number of U.S.-born children in that category, and the number of immigrant children estimated to never enroll in school. We also analyzed two kinds of information which have been used as proxies for the immigrant population — ethnicity data, and enrollment statistics on special programs targetted for immigrant or refugee children, and found these are not the best means of identifying these children.



Ethnicity Data—An Overapproximation of Immigrant Demography

Many discussions of student achievement and projections about the composition of the student population in California revolve around ethnicity. Most of this data lumps ethnic groups into five general categories: Hispanic, non-Hispanic white, Black, Asian and "Other." Current and projected enrollment shows the school-age population changing ethnically over the next 50 years as illustrated by Table 2.

However, ethnicity is not a direct measure of immigrant or even language status. California was built by a diverse group of peoples; there are generations-old communities here within each of the ethnic/racial populations. A comparison of students' ethnicity with language status (a closer approximation of immigrant status) shows that 36% of those categorized as Hispanic ethnicity are native English speakers; only 33% are classified as Limited English Proficient indicating they are more likely to be foreign born. A larger percentage of the state's Asian population (54%) has a primary language other than English. Overall, however, because ethnicity data includes such a large proportion of U.S.-born children, it is not particularly helpful in trying to analyze the immigrant demography.

Special School Program Enrollment—A Low Estimate

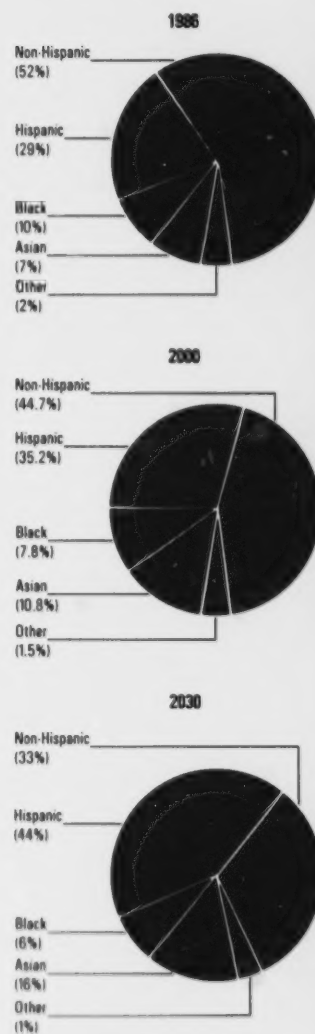
The Emergency Immigrant Education Program provides funds to school districts which meet eligibility requirements and voluntarily apply. The funding is based on documented numbers of eligible immigrant students in the district who have been in the United States three years or less. Because of problems in adequate documentation of eligible immigrant children, the three-year restriction, and the voluntary nature of application for the funds, the number of immigrant students served through this fund is unquestionably low as an estimate of the total number of immigrant children in the schools. However, because it is the sole data source we know which addresses only immigrant children, it serves as at least a low baseline for understanding the number and distribution of immigrants in the schools. In 1985, 193,625 (close to 5%) of the state's public school students were served by this program.

The Language Census—A Closer Picture

While school data is not compiled on a child's country of origin or immigration status, schools *do* determine whether a language other than English is spoken at home. For 29% of California school children, this is the case. This data, as well as data on the specific language groups of individual children, are reported to the state by all schools through the Home Language Census. (There is no way to document the number of immigrant children who do not enroll in the schools, but it is generally believed to be a significant number—particularly of children who immigrate in the teenage years.)

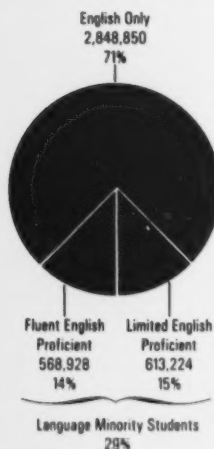
If a language other than English is spoken in the home, a child's English language proficiency must be assessed, and data recorded as to whether the child is limited in English proficiency. Those who score below a specified percentile on a standardized test are determined to be Limited English Proficient (LEP). That is, their ability to understand, speak, read and write in English is sufficiently limited to deny them the ability to learn successfully in classrooms where the only language of instruction is English. Those who score above that level, either ini-

TABLE 2: California's School-Age Population by Race/Ethnicity



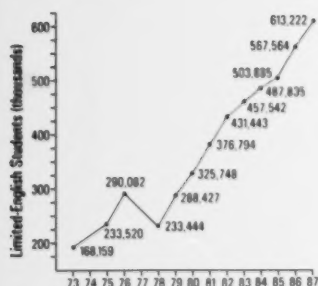
Projections from Population Reference Bureau (Bouvier and Martin) 1985.

TABLE 3: Students in California Public Schools Language Proficiency



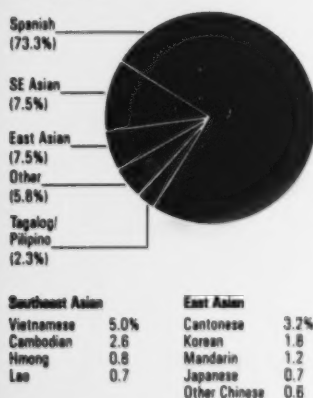
Source: California State Department of Education, Spring, 1987

TABLE 4: Numbers of Limited-English Proficient Students in California Public Schools, 1973-1987



Source: California State Department of Education

TABLE 5: California Public Schools Limited English Proficient Enrollment By Major Language Groups, Spring, 1987.



Source: State Department of Education Bilingual Education Unit

tially or after a period of time with special language assistance, are determined to be Fluent English Proficient (FEP). In the spring of 1987, there were 613,222 children designated as LEP in California schools. Another 568,928 were designated as FEP.

Immigrant children are almost always Limited English Proficient when they enter school. But not all children who are judged to be Limited English Proficient are necessarily immigrants. For a variety of reasons related to the nature of Mexican immigration and settlement in California, approximately 10-25% of Spanish monolingual children are U.S. born. While Language Census data thus is an overestimate of numbers of immigrant children from Mexico, it is a closer approximation for immigrant children in other language and national groups. The official state count of Limited English Proficient students does not include children who because of failures in the identification process are never assessed—a problem that appears to occur in many districts (see Chapter 5). In addition, we estimate that half of the FEP children are foreign born. Our 16% estimate of the number of immigrant children in California schools was calculated, taking all of these factors into consideration. In spite of these problems, in lieu of data specifically on immigrant children and because the Language Census data is so comprehensive, we will utilize data on LEP children as the closest available approximation of the experiences of immigrant children throughout this report. Table 3 portrays the California public school population by English language proficiency.

These students, representing more than 45 language groups, are more concentrated in the lower grades of the K-12 system, with close to 48% in the first few years of elementary school. Approximately 19% are in the high school grades. This is due to a combination of factors: the higher birth rates and larger than average number of younger children in families who have recently arrived, as well as higher drop out rates and attrition in the higher grades, particularly for Mexican-born children.

Since 1977 there has been a steady and steep yearly increase (see Table 4) totalling 250% in the Limited English Proficient population. While the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 may alter estimates, this number has been projected to increase by 5-7% yearly in the next decade.

The single largest language group in California schools by far is Spanish, representing 73% of the LEP population, followed by Vietnamese (5.4%), Cantonese (3.5%), Cambodian (2.5%), Pilipino/Tagalog (2.4%) and smaller percentages of dozens of other language groups (see Table 5). Due to funding and time limitations, and the need to focus this research, we chose to delve into the experiences of only the largest immigrant populations in California. Similarities and differences between these groups and other immigrant populations (such as Farsi, Burmese, Ethiopian, Russian and others) are topics for further research.

Where They Are in the State

While there is no doubt that immigrant students are a significant portion of the students in our public schools, their impact on the community differs greatly depending on several factors: their absolute numbers; their concentration within a district; and the mix of immigrant groups and immigration wave patterns in the community. For example, whereas Los Angeles, Orange and San Diego counties have the greatest number of immigrant students, the greatest concentrations are in Imperial and San Francisco counties.

**COUNTIES WITH GREATEST
NUMBERS OF LEP STUDENTS
Spring, 1985**



County	Number of LEP Students
Los Angeles	240,805
Orange	43,414
San Diego	35,640
Santa Clara	24,295
San Francisco	18,793
Alameda	16,726
San Joaquin	12,781
Fresno	12,173
Riverside	11,352
San Bernardino	11,063

**COUNTIES WITH GREATEST
CONCENTRATION OF LEP STUDENTS
Spring, 1985**



County	LEP As % Of County School Enrollment
Imperial	32.6
San Francisco	29.7
San Benito	23.4
Monterey	20.8
Los Angeles	19.2
San Joaquin	17.1
Santa Cruz	15.6
Merced	14.2
Orange	13.0
Stanislaus	12.3

1. Numbers Throughout the State

Immigrant students are enrolled in schools throughout the state, but the greatest numbers are in the larger Bay Area, the Central Valley and Southern California. The state's larger metropolitan areas have the greatest numbers of immigrants. Statewide, 95% of the current foreign born reside in metropolitan areas, and 60% of them are in the San Francisco and Los Angeles areas.

When LEP students from all language groups are combined, Los Angeles County has the largest number by far — close to 50% of the state's total — followed by Orange County with 8.3%, and San Diego with 6.8%. Within counties, districts differ substantially in the number of immigrants served. The districts with the greatest numbers include: Los Angeles Unified (145,209), San Francisco (19,828), Santa Ana (17,947), San Diego (14,687), Long Beach (13,691), Oakland (10,358), Fresno (8,684), Montebello (8,184), Stockton (8,040), and Compton (6,824). Districts ranked by their enrollment of LEP students are listed on Table 6.

2. Concentration Throughout the State

Concentration is defined as the immigrant population's percentage of the total school enrollment. The majority of school districts in the state have designated at least 5% of their students as LEP. Twelve percent have designated at least 20% LEP.

The greatest impact is on smaller elementary school districts in areas of the state with large immigrant populations. In 1986 in eight districts, for example, more than half of the students were LEP: San Ysidro in San Diego County (81%), Calexico in Imperial County (79%), Chualar Elementary in Monterey County (74%), Lennox Elementary in Los Angeles County (71%), Stone Corral Elementary in Tulare County (70%), Panoche in San Bernardino County (63%), Greenfield Elementary in Kern County (57%), and Earlimart Elementary in Tulare County (52%).

3. Mix of Immigrant Groups Within a District

Most school districts in the state have an immigrant student population, but the students differ in the countries of origin and language groups they represent. The particular mix and concentration of language groups within a district and community have a significant impact on how services need to be designed and delivered. For example, a district where the vast majority of LEP children are of one language group can more easily design bilingual programs and language support. Districts with a smattering of many different language groups or the large coastal urban areas which are Ports of Entry for very diverse groups of immigrants face a more complex grouping and programming challenge.

Schools can be more or less prepared to serve immigrant children, depending on the history of immigration in the community. Areas such as San Francisco and Los Angeles that have long served as ports of entry for immigrants have histories of incorporating them into the school programs. Other communities are being affected for the first time by waves of immigrants from countries and cultures which were largely unknown to them ten years ago. Witness some of the recent dramatic demographic changes in the schools throughout the state: In the Garvey School District in Los Angeles County the Asian LEP population has grown from 8% to 42% of the student population in just seven years. In Stockton Unified School District the LEP student population has quadrupled in five years and now includes a large Southeast Asian population that was non-existent there a decade ago.

**TABLE 6: Districts Ranked by Enrollment of LEP* Students
Spring 1985, All Languages Combined**

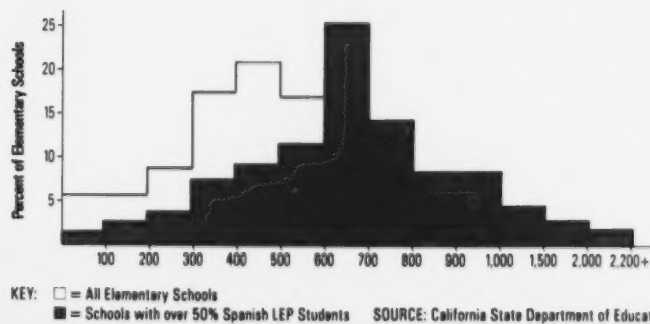
District Name	Number of LEP Students Enrolled	% of Total State LEP Enrollment	% of Total District LEP Enrollment
Los Angeles Unified	134,171	25.6	23.8
San Francisco Unified	18,787	3.6	29.8
Santa Ana Unified	16,763	3.2	47.5
San Diego Unified	14,234	2.7	12.8
Long Beach Unified	11,524	2.2	18.7
Oakland Unified	9,175	1.8	17.8
Stockton City Unified	7,940	1.5	29.5
Fresno Unified	7,854	1.5	14.4
Montebello Unified	7,496	1.4	25.3
Compton Unified	6,305	1.2	23.5
Sweetwater Union High	6,106	1.2	25.2
Glendale Unified	6,027	1.2	30.1
Pomona Unified	5,217	1.0	24.1
Garden Grove Unified	4,747	0.9	13.0
Sacramento City Unified	4,717	0.9	11.0
East Side Union High	4,596	0.9	20.5
San Jose Unified	4,423	0.8	14.5
Pajaro Valley Joint Unified	4,133	0.8	30.9
Calexico Unified	3,679	0.7	72.1
ABC Unified	3,619	0.7	16.4
	281,513	53.8%	

*LEP: Limited English proficient

Source: California State Department of Education.



**TABLE 7: Comparison of Average Size of California Elementary School to Schools with
over 50% Spanish LEP Students**



4. Distribution Within a School District

The distribution of immigrant children within a school district has yet a different significant impact on the nature of the challenge facing the schools. Immigrant children are seldom equally distributed throughout the schools in a community. A few schools or areas of the district may have very large clusters of immigrant children, and others may have none at all. In addition, the residential patterns of immigrants are that they tend to settle in the most populated and poorer areas of a community. Thus, the children are disproportionately placed in schools that are overcrowded and plagued by other problems such as fewer credentialled and less trained teachers, more substitutes, higher absenteeism among students and staff, poorer family resources among students, and worse facilities.

The majority of elementary schools in the state have less than 500 students in them. But we found that the great majority of elementary schools in California with 50% or more LEP enrollment have over 600 students in them (see Table 7). One-fourth of the elementary schools with high concentrations of LEP students have an enrollment of over 1,000 students.

In spite of a disturbing lack of any data base on immigrant children, they are for many school districts the new heart of the student population. At this time, however, state level (and most local area) leadership is not collecting the necessary data to assist in planning for the vast demographic changes affecting our state.

"The problem is larger than the schools. When I talk about we or they, I'm not talking about Boards of Education. This needs to be a wholesale response by state leaders to set up a basic orientation. As long as we continue to make out that maybe they aren't here, or maybe we don't want them, or maybe they'll go away, then we have our heads in the sand. To be purely pragmatic, no one is going away, and sociologists will tell you that the future of California is multi-cultural in its people. And we'd be smart to accept that and prepare for it."

John Howard, Principal
Belmont High School, Los Angeles

RESOURCES

The following contacts are provided as resources in establishing district level research systems and analyzing and disseminating statistical data on the demographic patterns and achievement of LEP students within a district:

Lilia Stapleton, Administrator
Special Programs and Services
ABC Unified School District
16700 Norwalk Blvd.
Cerritos, CA 90701
(213) 926-5566

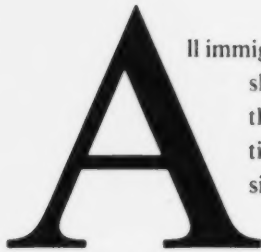
Robert Harrington, Coordinator
Planning, Research and Information
Systems Dept.
San Francisco Unified School District
135 Van Ness Ave.

San Francisco, CA 94102
(415) 565-9000

Frank Ciriza, Evaluator
Research, Planning and Evaluation Division
San Diego Unified School District
4100 Normal St.
San Diego, CA 92103
(619) 293-8514

For more information about state
Department of Education data on LEP stu-
dents, contact:

Judy Lambert, Consultant
Bilingual Education Unit
State Dept. of Education
P.O. Box 944272
Sacramento, CA 94244-2720
(916) 445-2872



ll immigrant children, regardless of country of origin, are newcomers to the United States and share the experience of adjusting to a new culture and language—but the differences in what that adjustment entails, the success of the adjustment, and the supports needed in the transition differ tremendously depending on the life experiences brought by the child. Most significantly these include:

Nation of origin and reasons for coming to the United States

Age at which immigrated and degree of prior schooling

Extent of economic deprivation and resources brought with the family in their immigration

Difficulties in the journey

Extent of life disruption and trauma due to war

Immigration status (official refugee, legal or undocumented)

Other issues include prior exposure to U.S. culture and to the English language, whether or not a child is literate in his or her native language, previous experience with bilingualism or living in a new country, and the extent of family separation caused by immigration. This chapter seeks to demonstrate how very differently these variables may play out in the lives of children in the major immigrant groups in California. The differences make it clear that educational programs cannot be planned for “immigrants” as if they were a homogeneous population with a singular set of needs.

Nation of Origin and Reasons for Coming to the United States

Immigrants are attracted to the United States for a multitude of reasons which include both “push” factors from their homelands, such as war and economic hardship, and the “pull” factors which make life in the U.S. seem more attractive, such as jobs and educational opportunities. California has a particularly strong pull, with its relatively strong economy and ability to generate jobs at almost twice the national average (McCarthy and Valdez) in addition to its location on the Pacific Rim and sharing a border with Mexico. The nature of immigration is effected by the country of origin.

Mexico. Mexican immigration patterns differ from those of other countries for both geographic and historical reasons. Mexico shares a highly porous border with the United States, and a long history of movement back and forth along that border in response to economic conditions in both countries. With this history and the presence of large established Mexican-American communities here in California, the standard stereotype of an immigrant community which leaves its homeland behind to settle permanently in a new country is simply not so true for Mexican immigrants.

Although there is a centuries-long history, large scale Mexican immigration really began in the 1940's, with the introduction of the Bracero Program. During the Bracero era, most immigration was seasonal as guest workers came north to work and then returned to Mexico. The largest wave of Mexican immigration has been since the mid 1960's, some retaining the cyclical patterns of earlier Mexican immigrants but with an increasing number settling perma-

nently in California. More than a third of the state's Mexican-heritage residents are immigrants. Often they have their roots in rural areas or small towns in Mexico, and leave home because of poverty and the belief that economic conditions in the U.S. are more favorable. The majority come to find work in factories or the service industries in urban areas, or to join family members already here. Men frequently arrive alone and send for their families later.

Central America. Many Central Americans have come seeking better economic opportunities, fleeing the tremendously depressed economies of home, as well as the more recent turmoil, civil war and violence there. Central American immigrants tend to fall into two distinct groups, one large, with little education and skills, and a smaller group with higher education, professional job status and middle class living standards. One Salvadoran child might have immigrated legally several years ago with college-educated parents, a strong academic background, and a relatively peaceful past, while another child from the same country may have more recently fled from traumatic war experiences, arrived in the U.S. alone and undocumented, and have little past education or supports in this country.

Since 1981 the largest group of Central Americans have come from earthquake devastated and civil-war wracked El Salvador, Guatemala and Nicaragua. Many are undocumented, and applications for refugee status or political asylum are seldom granted. Immigrants from Costa Rica, Honduras and Belize generally come for economic reasons; Honduras is the most impoverished country in Central America and shares its borders with the three main trouble spots in the region.

Southeast Asia. The vast majority of Southeast Asians left their homelands due to war, but there are distinct differences among the groups. The first wave of Vietnamese refugees arrived immediately after the fall of Saigon in 1975. They were a more elite group, more educated and of a higher socio-economic class than more recent waves; many had worked with the U.S. government or military and thus had some prior contact with the U.S. They have generally fared better educationally and economically than later waves which have consisted more of soldiers, peasants, farmers and other working groups who had little if any formal education. Laos and Cambodia are considerably poorer and less developed nations than Vietnam, but the basic pattern of waves holds true; the earliest were more educated and privileged. The most recent (since 1980) have been primarily farmers and fishing people with little formal education. Many have spent years in refugee camps prior to arrival in the U.S.

Philippines. There have been three major waves of Filipino immigration to the United States. The first were primarily young men coming for a college education with plans to return to the Philippines. The second were agricultural workers immigrating to the Pacific Coast states to find work. In 1944, when the Philippines became independent from United States rule, a tight quota was placed on immigration. The more recent waves (since the 1965 Immigration Act) includes many educated families seeking better and more stable economic and educational conditions, people joining family members already in California and people escaping the economic and political pressures at home.

Far East. This category includes Koreans, Chinese and Japanese who despite important cultural and national differences share several common traits which distinguish them from other immigrant groups. Key reasons for current immigration to the U.S. from these countries include



TABLE 8: Reason for Immigrating to the United States, Student Sample

"In your understanding, why did you leave your homeland?"

	War, Political Violence/ Oppression	Join Family Members	Economic Reasons	Don't Know/ Other
All Combined	32%	23%	22%	23%
Mexican	3	23	47	27
Central American	39	24	20	17
SE Asian	79	5	3	13
Filipino	3	53	31	13
Other Asian (Chinese, Japanese, Korean)	25	32	4	39

educational opportunities, economic improvement and reunification with family members already living in California. Historically, immigration from the Far East was associated with agricultural, mining and railroad labor in California until the banning of immigration from the Far East in the early 1900's and the growth of "yellow peril" sentiment and discrimination. Since the second world war and the repeal of the national quota immigration system, immigration from these countries has increased tremendously. As a group, Japanese, Chinese and Korean immigrants bring more college degrees than other immigrant groups. In addition to these shared patterns, there are other factors specific to each country.

Japanese began immigrating to the United States before the turn of the century. They were mostly poor young males from the agricultural provinces of Japan, coming with little capital and seeking work in the California fields. A movement of picture brides to join these workers began to establish Japanese family communities in the early 1900's. The Immigration Act of 1924 forbade the further immigration of Japanese. After World War II, Japanese came primarily to reunite with families. More recently, as international trade in the Pacific Rim has become a major part of the economies of both Japan and California, immigration from Japan has included highly skilled, college educated, urban businesspeople and professionals and their families.

Chinese immigration has historically followed similar patterns. Additionally, the revolution and establishment of a new government in China in 1949 resulted in an increase of immigration to the U.S. A recent trend specific to Taiwanese is to send children alone to the United States on temporary student visas to live with residents in order to avoid compulsory military service for males, and because of limited space in Taiwan colleges. Also, with China's lease of Hong Kong to Britain expiring in 1997, there has been a wave of Hong Kong Chinese immigrating here to avoid the uncertain political and economic effects of the transfer.

Koreans are a more recent immigrant community to California than Chinese or Japanese. Although there was some immigration of field, railroad and mining workers from Korea to the mainland U.S. after the turn of the century, arrivals didn't grow measurably until after 1965. Although there are exceptions, recent Korean newcomers are primarily highly educated, professional, technical or managerial workers settling here to improve their standard of living and provide their children with good educations.

Children do not make the decisions as to whether or when they immigrate. A full third of our student sample were not advised they were leaving until the journey began, and 14% could not articulate why they left. As shown in Table 8, "Reasons for Immigrating to the United States," the reasons given varied from: "to get an education," to fleeing from war, violence and destruction (discussed later in this chapter), to economics, to being reunified with family members who had immigrated earlier. For some children it appeared as a *choice*—an opportunity to reach for something better and more positive than what is possible in their homeland.

"I was excited. I was dancing. We were going to the United States—a big beautiful, modern country with houses and lawns. My father could work there, and we would have food and clothes and my mother wouldn't cry at night. This is what I thought then. No more poverty."

10th grade Mexican girl, immigrated at age 9

Age at Which Immigrated and Prior Education

Some immigrant children come to the U.S. before they are of school age; approximately one in five enter in the primary grades. The older children must bridge the gaps between the U.S. education system and the schooling received in their homelands or refugee camps. Their prior schooling ranges from virtually none to full, solid academic programs, possibly more rigorous than what they encounter here. Some have been exposed to one hour a day of political indoctrination as their sole education, while others have put in eight-hour school days, six days a week covering all major academic areas plus intensive English tutoring. This wealth or deficit of education in an immigrant child's background should be, but unfortunately often is not, properly evaluated to determine the kind of program and support needed in making a successful transition to the U.S. school system.

In many countries, there are dramatic contrasts between rural and urban education. For example, in Mexico although primary education is officially compulsory, 75% of those in urban areas finish the 6th grade, compared to only 15% of those in rural areas. In El Salvador most rural area schools don't go beyond 2nd grade and operate with few materials or trained teachers. Thus an immigrant child's educational background is affected both by nation of origin and by whether he or she is from urban or rural areas within that country.

The education of most children from Korea, Japan, the Philippines and China can be characterized as strict in discipline, with tightly structured long school days, and relying a great deal on lecture and rote memorization. Education is highly valued as a means of social mobility and prestige. Students are tested regularly and promotion to the next grade is based on passing these tests. In the Philippines, English is a language of instruction in the schools and children begin to study it in the first year. English language instruction and tutoring are offered in most of these countries.

Most students from Southeast Asia in the past decade have had disrupted school histories because of war, and have lived for a period in refugee camps. Depending on the camp's location and who ran it, a student may have had a few hours a day or less of instruction. Most camps had minimal if any books or instructional materials and few educated teachers; some provided English classes. Immigrants from the Hmong and Mien hill tribes of Laos face tremendous barriers upon entering U.S. schools. Only in the past thirty years have there been written forms of their languages. Before then the transmission of culture and education was entirely oral. Only rarely in these communities were there newspapers, books, signs, television or other contact with industrialized nations and cultures.

Extent of Economic Deprivation and of Resources Brought with the Family

The resources and skills a family had in their native land may or may not translate into resources here in the United States. Particularly for those who are here illegally, but to some degree for all immigrants, economic resettlement is very difficult. Many immigrant children belong to families of low socioeconomic status here in the United States. They often reside in substandard housing in overcrowded neighborhoods, leading to high mobility which affects their schooling. The existence of a support community becomes essential for help in resettlement, finding housing, finding employment, and assistance when all else fails. Here again there are significant differences in the situations of immigrant children. Such support may be family members already living in California, or it may be an already existing community of immi-

grants with a network of self-help, church, social service agencies and supports. Officially designated refugees have the advantage of federally funded support agencies, networks of host families, as well as a period of federal financial assistance.

"We had a family from the church who watched over us. They took me to school on my first day and helped us find a place to live, and found my mother a job. My mother said they are our American angels. The daughter was my first American friend. I went to her birthday party and stood by her when she blew the candles."

9th grade Vietnamese girl, immigrated at age 8

Some immigrant children come to join a strong community of extended family and friends. Others are not so fortunate, and the separation from family and loneliness in this country are terribly stressful. Some even come alone. Of our student sample, 59% did not immigrate with their full nuclear family. Eight percent immigrated without any family members.

Life Disruption and Trauma Due to War

Many immigrant children, particularly those from Central American and Southeast Asian countries, have suffered trauma from war and political violence; for most, this is the reason for immigration. Many have lost close relatives or friends — and have themselves been threatened and exposed to excessive violence, people dying and starving, war atrocities and destruction. Along with psychological and physical hardship, these disruptions bring major gaps in schooling and academic development to children whose present and future plans are unsettled and insecure. Analyzing responses to our student questionnaires, we found these factors put them more at risk for school problems, failure and dropping out than students who had moved from an intact life in one place, and within a day or two in transit begun a new life in the United States.

Both Southeast Asia and Central America have been torn by war in the past decade. For example, in Cambodia during the years of the Pol Pot regime most professionals and educated people were killed, there were no schools in the country, children were separated from their families and sent to live in work farms. The country was cut off from the rest of the world and almost half of the population died from starvation, disease or execution. During 1975–78, as many as two million people (in a country of only 7 million) are estimated to have been killed at the hands of the Khmer Rouge. The entire Central American region has been wracked by civil war. In addition, in Guatemala and El Salvador human rights violations, assassinations by death squads and political violence are regular occurrences.

Our in-depth interviews were filled with horror stories of war and violence encountered by children before fleeing their countries.

"The tragedy during the war hurts inside when I remember what happened in the past. I try to not think about it, but at night I dream and see my brother who they killed. I dream about him trying to find us. I dream they keep shooting him and shooting him until I wake up."

10th grade Cambodian boy, immigrated at age 12



In public testimony and clinical literature, mental health professionals have identified post-traumatic stress syndrome as frequent among immigrants, including depression, insomnia, nightmares, lack of appetite, deep grief and sometimes guilt. They say the degree of war trauma is a significant factor in the overall adjustment of a child to life in the United States and to schooling in particular.



From a recent exhibit of drawings by Guatemalan refugee children at Seattle's Burke Museum. Collected by Janet Spritzler Levin from children in refugee camps in Southern Mexico.



**TABLE 9: Length of Journey,
Student Sample**

"How long did it take from when you left your home in _____ until you arrived in the United States?"

	Less 1 wk.	1 wk - 3 mo.	3-12 mo.	1-3 yr.	3+ yr.
All Combined	55%	14%	12%	19%	0%
Mexican	85	13	2	-	-
Central American	51	34	10	5	-
SE Asian	7	12	28	52	1
Filipino	100	-	-	-	-
Other Asian (Chinese, Japanese, Korean)	56	11	13	20	-

"A teacher called us for help. A third grader in her class had been sitting in the back of the class with little response. At first they thought it was just a language problem, but the teacher became concerned after a parent/teacher conference when a relative came and through a translator was able to let the teacher know that the child had seen her family murdered but had managed to escape herself, and was now staying with this relative for safekeeping. The child may have been violated at the time her family was killed, but she won't talk about it so they don't know for sure. The child had recurring nightmares of the murder scene. The teacher was stunned."

Jacob Perea, Professor

La Raza Studies, San Francisco State University
Public Testimony, San Francisco

Students who themselves manage to overcome the trauma of their war experiences, or who may not personally have encountered the horror, often live with family members who are suffering from such trauma:

"I worry a lot about my mother. She's gone crazy now. Her mind's gone. She won't eat anything, just drinks water and is old and sick. She can't get up and sometimes she doesn't know me. She thinks the soldiers are outside waiting."

9th grade Lao girl, immigrated at age 11

The disruption of children's lives caused by war includes displacement and varying lengths of time before they are resettled elsewhere. One third of the Southeast Asian students in our research sample spent three or more years in refugee camps. Over half of them were in transit for more than a year. Children from Central America, too, have often spent time in refugee camps near the borders and then endured a long journey to and across the U.S. borders.

"The first camp was terrible. Soldiers were mean and would push us down. There was little food and water and the children cried all the time. I was very sick but I had to go stand in line for a long time to try to get water. I was there for four months. Then I was sent to another camp, not in the mountains, and it was nicer. It was clean and there was some food. I was there a year. The best, though was the last camp I was in because it was big and there was a teacher who was nice to us. When I heard we were coming to the United States, though, I was so happy. I thought now I could have a home again."

10th grade Cambodian girl, immigrated at age 10

The Journey

"The vast majority of Indochinese immigrant children will have the memory of their life in the refugee camp. For some this may have lasted for only a brief time. For others, their stay could have lasted for as long as ten years. For many, their only memory of their homeland is that of war, dislocation, hardship and suffering. Fleeing from a situation and becoming a refugee within their own country. Uprooted from their home and community. Their journey and flight from their homeland in Laos, for example, would have been over the mountains and through the jungles, lasting perhaps as long as 20 days before they reached the Thai-Laotian border and undertook a dangerous crossing across the

Mekong River. On their journey they would have suffered from inadequate food, illness, disease and attack. Many people died attempting to cross the Mekong River. As a result of what they have lived through, many of these children continue to suffer, haunted by memories of the war, separation from family, traumatic journey, their life in the camps, and the loss of their traditional lifestyle, culture, language and values."

David Gilbert, Researcher
Public Testimony, San Francisco

For some immigrant students, the journey to the United States was preceded by extensive planning and preparation and involved only a one- or two-day smooth trip by plane, boat or car to legally cross our borders. For many, however, the journey itself was a source of trauma, uncertainty and difficulty. Table 9 shows the different journey experiences among our student sample.



"Poverty is rampant in Central America, to an extent and degree to which Americans are simply not familiar. These youngsters have suffered because of the frequent sights of many adults acting in ruthless and homicidal fashions. If this hasn't been enough, for a number of these youngsters they continue to experience deep stress after leaving their country. A number came unaccompanied to the U.S. Some of these, en route, were assaulted physically, others sexually. Many will describe horror tales of crossing the border, because most do not have documents. They simply try to get in any way they can. Many were piled, as much as ten, in an automobile trunk. Others were placed in makeshift compartments by an engine. A couple that I treated had severe burns they sustained in attempting to cross the border in an engine compartment."

Dr. William Arroyo, Psychiatrist
LAC-USC Medical Center
Public Testimony, Los Angeles

For children from Latin America the journey may have included risky and repeated attempts to cross the border illegally, INS detention and deportation, separation from family members, high payments to "coyotes," being deserted or lost.

"It was very scary to me. We went separate across. I was caught the first time and sent back to my aunt's house. This time she paid a lot of money to a coyote to get me across. He put me in a sack in the back of a truck with potatoes and told me to be totally quiet until he came to get me. I was hot and couldn't breathe and so scared. I cried with no sound. After hours I think he came to get me. I had gotten across. But where was my mother?"

9th grade Mexican boy, immigrated at age 7

The common experience among children from Southeast Asia is of a prolonged and dangerous trek. For some this meant days and weeks on foot trying to escape across a border to a refugee camp or place of asylum. With little food or water, these journeys have entailed living in fear of being caught by soldiers, seeing family members killed or disappear on the trek and continuing on without them, being robbed and threatened with death, surrounded by disease and death. Others whose escapes were by water tell of near drownings at sea and encounters with pirates.

"We were on a boat for many days with no food or water. Some of the people died. We prayed and prayed to be rescued. Some pirates came. I thought they would save us. My mother cried and begged them not to take me. She gave them gold from her belly button. I was very sick and thought I too would die there."

10th grade Vietnamese girl, immigrated at age 9

Immigration Status

Many immigrants are "legal residents"—they enter the United States and live under the protection of legal immigration status. Some are fortunate to be officially designated "refugees," with transitional support services and assistance provided by the U.S. government. It is estimated that as many as half of the foreign born in California, however, are "illegal"—here without documentation. They take risks in getting across the border, and then live in fear of being identified and deported.

Mexican immigration is believed to be largely undocumented and uncontrolled, although there are no accurate statistics or numbers. Many Central American immigrants are also undocumented, and applications for refugee status or political asylum are seldom granted. Because the largest wave of Central American immigrants has been in the past five years, they are not eligible for amnesty under provisions of the 1986 immigration law. Most immigrants from Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia and Thailand have been granted official refugee status. There is believed to be a substantial number of people from other Asian countries who either entered illegally or came in with a temporary visa and remained after it expired.

For children, being here illegally brings increased instability, fear and insecurity to their lives. It also means living without protections, social services and assistance available to most people in this country. We found high correlations between undocumented status and dropping out or never enrolling in school, with interference with schoolwork, as well as with physical and mental health problems. Also, undocumented children are more likely than other immigrants to move frequently, hampering their attachment and achievement in school.

Fear and confusion for undocumented children were heightened in the year we conducted our research because of the passage of the Immigration Reform and Control Act, and the uncertainty it caused among their families about its implications in their lives. Legally, undocumented children are assured free access to public education, but they and their families are not always clear about this right, nor the extent to which school authorities are in contact with the INS. This distrust is exacerbated by occasional INS raids on school sites, the use of children as "bait" to entrap undocumented adults, and ignorance or outright breaking of policy by school staff and authorities who ask for immigration papers as a condition of registration at school. While detention and deportation is not a common experience, it is an overwhelmingly common fear in the lives of undocumented children.

"One thing that is happening in Orange County is a big fear about immigration raids.

We've had instances where the border control has come in to campuses or right outside of elementary schools. In a recent incident, a twelve-year-old boy was picked up riding his bicycle. That has sent fear amongst parents as well as children. So kids aren't going to school."

Audrey Yamagati-Noji, Commissioner
Orange County Human Relations
Public Testimony, Los Angeles

Grouping immigrant children and providing services purely on the basis of English language proficiency denies the very strong differences in their backgrounds, needs, skills and strengths. For each child, an analysis of these variables can make the difference between providing an educational and support program that works and one that doesn't.





"The educational system is the one immigrant youngsters interface with the most, and the potential good that the school system can do for them is tremendous. But the fact is that many school districts are responding weakly to the special needs of traumatized children. Frequently, Central American children are simply lumped together with Mexicans, in spite of the fact that they have different cultures, speak Spanish differently, identify themselves as nationally different and have different needs. They should not be lumped together simply because they speak the same language. Children must be seen for who they are."

Dr. William Arroyo, Psychiatrist
LAC-USC Medical Center
Public Testimony, Los Angeles

RESOURCES

These resources are public sources of information about the backgrounds of immigrant children which provide a view of the diversity and complexities of what they bring with them to the United States.

INSIGHT Multi-cultural Communication Inc. is a non-profit organization established to produce and distribute audio-visual programs documenting the cultural roots and contemporary realities of children from different parts of the world. The group works with refugee and immigrant groups to produce programs, and offers public awareness and cultural orientation workshops and audio-visual materials for educational, social service and relief organizations.

Contact
David Gilbert, Director
INSIGHT
314 Lobos Court
Point Richmond, California 94801
(415) 236-7527

The State Department of Education has published several handbooks for teachers about specific language groups of children. These include historical, sociological and linguistic information about the groups. Available for Cantonese, Portuguese, Vietnamese and Pilipino speaking students.

Contact
Publication Sales
State Department of Education
P.O. Box 271
Sacramento, CA 95802-0271

The State Department of Education Bilingual Office published an *Annotated Directory of Resources for the Emergency Immigrant Education Program* (1986). This directory provides names and contact information of selected resettlement professionals, refugee community leaders, social service professionals, psychologists and educators who are involved in working with immigrant children. One section also presents a list of readings and audiovisual materials for staff training about the needs and experiences of immigrant children.

Contact
Bilingual Office
State Department of Education
P.O. Box 944272
Sacramento, CA 95814

Chapter 3: THE NEW WORLD AN IMMIGRANT CHILD'S PERSPECTIVE

The immigrant child, as a newcomer in a strange land, faces a complicated process of adjustment. In addition to the regular tasks of childhood, the immigrant needs to make comprehensible a whole new culture and language and to create a new self-concept which embraces both the old and the new. This process of acculturation involves painful, sometimes unconscious decisions, such as what is to be saved or sacrificed from the old, evaluating what one wants or needs to adopt from the new, and integrating these into a comfortable sense of self. The choice to stay fully enmeshed with the native culture can dangerously isolate a child. Alternatively, those who in trying to embrace the new culture reject traditional values and customs may find themselves cut off from supportive social networks, and from their pasts. In our student interviews we asked a set of questions about this process, and learned that almost without exception the children seesaw back and forth, experimenting with solutions to the tension and trying to find a balance that makes sense in the new world.

"I don't know who I am. Am I the good Chinese daughter? Am I an American teenager? I always feel I am letting my parents down when I am with my friends because I act so American, but I also feel that I will never really be an American. I never feel really comfortable with myself anymore."

10th grade Chinese girl, immigrated at age 12

The great majority expressed a sharp longing for their homeland — the land and weather, the look and feel of their country, the "old ways," people left behind. They desired to visit their native countries someday, and spoke of a commitment to retain their native languages and some of the customs. Many made disparaging or saddened comments about students from their native countries who came to the United States and "forgot who they were," or "can no longer speak our language." Most hoped their own children would learn their native tongue.

"I'm glad to be American. I think you can be a lot more open here and we have a lot of fun. But I don't think it's right that some kids try so hard to not be Latin. They won't speak Spanish, and some of them don't even know how anymore. To me that is sad. My children will be born here, and they will be fully American, but I want them to know our language. I want them to be able to speak to my grandmother, and to go back to Mexico and feel it is also their home. Without a connection to where you come from, without your family and your past, you are just lost."

10th grade Mexican girl, immigrated at age 14

The children interviewed also spoke with nervous pride of the new U.S. behaviors they are adopting, often having to do with outward appearance (hair-dos, clothing) or relationships with peers of the opposite sex. They spoke of becoming more "open" and outspoken with their opinions and in relations with adults. Delighting in what many feel is a new freedom to play, "hang-out," and mix freely, they also acknowledge these ways create conflict within themselves and their families. For example, they expressed shock and discomfort about U.S. boyfriends and girlfriends that hold hands and kiss in school hallways, even as they talked about arguments with their parents about going to a party where there was dancing with members of the opposite sex.

Disapproval of the U.S. students' "sassiness" and disrespect for teachers, "bad" language and verbal abuse, and lack of appreciation for education and freedom were raised again and

again in the student interviews. Values they hoped to pass along to their children usually concerned respect for elders, education and freedom.

Immigrant Children and Their Families

All children look to their families for support and protection in understanding and surviving in the world. As immigrant children negotiate their new environment, they intensely need such help from their families to ensure a secure home base and link to the past and the known. However, these children face a world usually unfamiliar to their parents as well, and are the first in the family to forge a path towards belonging. As a child begins to develop into a new part-native/part-American hybrid self, conflicts with families intensify.

"My family has such set values and they hold to them strongly. They hold onto the old ways. It is very difficult to explain something to them about my life now. We end up always arguing — about school, religion, how I dress, what I can and can't do. They even get mad at me for arguing. They say I shouldn't talk back. I hate my family. We fight all the time."

11th grade Cambodian girl, immigrated at age 10

Parents in a strange land feel particularly protective and fearful for their children. Trying to instill strong values and ensure their children's safety, they run up against the drive for freedom and open expression which seems to most immigrant children a true expression of their new Americanism.

"There is an increasing sense of separation between the parents and the children, where the parents are still having some trouble adjusting to the culture, to the language, the students themselves are moving forward which sometimes includes losing their sense of their roots. There's a clash in terms of the language, the values, the backgrounds. As a result, children ask 'Why don't my parents understand what I am feeling, what my values are?', and the parents ask 'Where have my children gone wrong, why don't they understand my values and my language any longer?'"

Carlos Cordova, Lecturer

La Raza Studies, San Francisco State University

At the same time, parents find themselves needing their children as a link to the future in the new land. Most immigrant parents do not speak English, many live in communities where little English is spoken, and they rely on their children to translate for them. With responsibility as interpreters of the new culture and language, immigrant children are often in a position with no one to translate or interpret for them. Traditional intergenerational authority relationships change and the child also becomes very involved in the worries and concerns of the family, such as hassles with landlords, arranging for medical care, dealing with the legal system.

Most immigrant families are in poor financial shape. Even those who were skilled and well employed in their native land often face employment barriers here in the United States. Pressure to help with family survival falls on all members. Children are sometimes needed to work, often because they learn English quicker and are better able to find jobs than the adults in their family. Further increasing the financial burden, many families try to send money back to relatives in the homeland to help out or provide the means for them to immigrate. Older children, primarily girls, are needed to care for younger members of the family while the adults work.



Babysitting and work pressure on immigrant children leave them little time for doing homework or other school activities, and sometimes necessitate missing school or dropping out altogether (see Chapter 8).

Yet, most immigrant families place a high value on education, and view their children's education as a key to family success in the new land. Pressure on the child can become intense as a result of these expectations.

"I'm the only one in my family who can read and write, and they think I'll be something successful. Sometimes I get angry about that, and fear I won't be able to do well enough. I study and study over and over again, harder than the other kids. If I don't get the best grade, my parents get angry at me and tell me I should do better."

10th grade Vietnamese girl, immigrated at age 13

Sex role expectations in the United States differ from traditional sex role values in many cultures. Female children in many immigrant families are pressured to follow traditional female roles. Their involvement in school is taken less seriously than their brothers'. Tighter restrictions are placed on their activities. Hmong girls, for example, are often encouraged to leave school, marry and have children in mid-adolescence. Mexican daughters may be encouraged to stay home and take care of siblings when needed even if it means missing school. Higher education and achievement for a Chinese or Japanese son is often considered far more important than for a daughter. Female children, caught between these conflicting demands feel stress and pressure, intensifying problems with their family and their new world.

Many immigrant children must adjust to living in a constellation of extended relatives, often in overcrowded housing.

"The process of family reunification is a big issue in mental health for immigrants. Many of the families have not been together, ever, under the same roof before. They are reunited with family members they don't know, so they need to establish and renegotiate the rules and relationships."

Norita Vlach, Therapist

Public Testimony, San Francisco

In answer to questions about personal problems that interfere with school work, many students told us of their family and living situations. For example, one Filipino girl who was sent to live in the United States with relatives said:

"I want to live with my parents, I miss them so much. My aunt is nice to me, but it is very hard to be away from my parents. I cry for them every night."

Another student, a Salvadoran teenager, spoke of a similar sadness and longing.

"I used to worry about my Dad a lot. That I'd never see him again because we left him behind in El Salvador. Now I plan to visit him when I graduate from high school. He will be very proud. I try to think positive, but last year I could hardly think of anything except my heartache and sadness."

As described in Chapter 2, many immigrant children, particularly those from Southeast Asia and Central America, have suffered trauma from war and violence. These students are





under tremendous stress from having lost family members to murder, war, flight and the unknown, and having lost their culture and homeland. Without the extended social network they may have had before the war, these are often the children who feel extreme pressure to perform well—with near impossible expectations for English fluency, adaptation to a new school system and culture, and resistance to prejudice and harassment.

Behaviors and values developed in war situations which may have been necessary to survive are often considered anti-social and unacceptable here. Refusal to divulge true information, stealing, fighting, distrust of authorities—all survival skills in war, get a child into trouble here in the United States.

Reports from social service agencies in many communities report an increase in gang activity, drug abuse and crime among immigrant youth. They cite break-downs in family discipline and authority patterns, problems in dealing with new found freedom, pressing economic conditions, tremendous family pressures to succeed, and the stresses of resettlement as related to this phenomenon.

The experience of immigration and transition involve tremendous adventure and near overwhelming stress for the immigrant child. Caught between conflicting demands and expectations, trying to make sense of one's past and build a hopeful future in a new country, dealing with the harsh realities of resettlement, and experimenting with the dizzying realm of new experiences are the common experience of immigration. Some are paralyzed or debilitated by the process, others come through it with a strong new sense of self. Regardless, these children are forging a path their parents often can't understand, into territory where their needs are little recognized nor appreciated.

For the child, the most important place for their new identity to work for them, be accepted and loved, is among their peers, at school.

The School Climate

"Nobody can really understand the life and inner struggles of new immigrants unless they have experienced it. My memories through these three years are actually full of tears. Before I wrote this short speech I didn't even want to think about it because they are painful to remember. Many of my friends are new immigrants. When we talk about the first two years we were here, we are saddened by the experiences. Working extremely hard didn't make us feel sad, facing challenges didn't make us feel sad, but some of the Americans' attitudes towards us did break our hearts. Before I came to America I had a beautiful dream about this country. At that time, I didn't know that the first word I learned in this country would be a dirty word. American students always picked on us, frightened us, made fun of us and laughed at our English. They broke our lockers, threw food on us in cafeteria, said dirty words to us, pushed us on the campus. Many times they shouted at me, 'Get out of here, you chink, go back to your country'. Many times they pushed me and yell on me. I've been pushed, I had gum thrown on my hair. I've been hit by stones, I've been shot by air-gun. I've been insulted by all the dirty words in English. All this really made me frustrated and sad. I often asked myself, 'Why do they pick on me?'"

Christina Tien
Chinese Immigrant Student
Public Testimony, Los Angeles

Education occurs within the context of a social climate. The relationships among students and the atmosphere of accepted social attitudes and behaviors create a "hidden curriculum" which affects whether and how well a child can learn. Immigrant students enter a school system and a social environment they view as very hostile to them. Generally their first year in the United States is a shock; high expectations and hopes collide with too-often indifferent (or worse, hostile) first encounters with others, difficult financial realities for their families, and the tremendous effort demanded to bridge cultural and language differences. Their first year in their new school is characterized by them as terribly lonely, frightening and confusing.

"We left our native homeland and came to this mighty land with great ambitions, and hope that we might better our futures. What we expected and hoped for seems far distant. All are now being slowly tormented by the frustrations and hostility which this new land has to offer. Yes, discrimination and insult, our most fierce enemy, whom we battle in our everyday lives. Our unexplainable and unexpressible thoughts and feelings are slowly building up until they are ready to explode any minute. If others could only, would only, understand us."

Preface to a Korean Student Club Charter
Orange County

Racial and ethnic hostility, violence and prejudice clearly are an integral part of the social fabric on most school campuses and in many communities. This is of humanitarian concern because of the effects on the children who are its victims. But it is also of concern because of what it says about our society. Native U.S. born children are given little help, through the school curricula and programs or in their community role models, in understanding the newcomers in their midst. Fear, intolerance, ethnocentrism and prejudice prevent a democracy from thriving, and make a pluralistic society unworkable. The majority of the immigrant students in our research believe that Americans feel negatively and unwelcoming towards them. Comments like, "they look down on us," "they are afraid we are going to take over," "they wish we'd go back where we came from," or "they think we are taking their jobs and money" were most common. The Indochinese students were more likely to also mention positive attitudes towards newcomers, perhaps because as official refugees they were met with formalized support systems and are viewed as legitimate. These views are consistent with data that has been collected on general attitudes towards, and actual harassment of immigrants in our society.

Almost every student in our sample reported the first school year included incidents of being called names, pushed or spat upon, deliberately tricked, teased and laughed at because of their race, language difficulties, accent or foreign dress. "This is our country, we don't want you here," "If you can't speak our language, you shouldn't live here" and other anti-immigrant sentiments are too often slung verbally. "FOBies," "wetbacks" and other racist epithets can be found scrawled in graffiti on school walls.

"The Americans tell us to go back to our own country. I say we don't have a country to go back to. I wish I was born here and nobody would fight me and beat me up. They don't understand. I want to tell them if they had tried to cross the river and were afraid of being caught and killed and lost their sisters, they might feel like me, they might look like me, and they, too, might find themselves in a new country."

10th grade Cambodian boy, immigrated at age 12

When asked to characterize the relations between racial/ethnic groups and between immigrants and others at their schools, 50% of the middle school students and close to 70% of the high school students in the sample reported severe tensions or problems. Students who immigrated in their elementary school years reported less overt hostility, but similar isolation, than experienced in higher levels of school. To some extent, the greater degree of hostility shown by U.S.-born teens, and immigrant teenagers' vulnerability to that hostility are likely factors of both adolescent insecurity and intense peer orientation. However, the phenomenon is so widespread, so reflective of tensions in the greater community, and so painful, that it cannot simply be written off as "teens will be teens." While such hostility is difficult for any child to cope with, immigrant children may be particularly ill-prepared. Most have come from countries far more ethnically homogeneous than the United States. The vast majority of students interviewed for this study responded to questions about their reactions to the United States in terms of the heterogeneity of the population: "I thought they'd all be Anglos," "I was surprised there were Latins here," "I'd never seen a Black person before." While yearning to "fit in" and become American, they find themselves faced with an array of cultural and racial groups, each with differing behaviors and friendship circles.

"It is an impossibility at the beginning for the students to comprehend the different cultures and languages. To move from a village in Laos, say, to the multi-ethnic neighborhoods of San Francisco is a cultural shock that should not be underestimated."

Paul Cheng, Principal
Newcomer High School, San Francisco

Schoolground tensions described by the children varied from interracial, to native-born vs. the foreign born, to newcomers vs. children whose families immigrated earlier from the same country.

"Another problem has to do with the relationship between the American-born child of immigrants and the immigrant student. . . . there is just as big a gulf, just as great a chasm, not only between the immigrant youngster and the larger society, but within a minority community itself—a chasm of language, culture and the drive to be assimilated."

Victor Low, Assistant Principal
Alamo School
Public Testimony, San Francisco

Close to half of the high school students and a fourth of the middle school students report these splits between immigrants on the basis of length of time in the United States. Yet, immigrant students believe that those who have been here longer hold the key to becoming American, look to them for help, and are deeply hurt when the "experienced" kids rebuff them.

"There is so much discrimination and hate. Even from other kids from Mexico who have been here longer. They don't treat us like brothers. They hate even more. It makes them feel more like the natives. They want to be American. They don't want to speak Spanish to us, they already know English and how to act. If they're with us, other people will treat them more like wetbacks, so they try to avoid us."

9th grade Mexican boy,
immigrated six months previous

For protection, out of fear and confusion, immigrant students tend to stay in isolated groupings. Two-thirds of our sample reported that their friends are primarily other immigrants from their same country of origin. They say this is largely because of language — “we can speak to each other” — and because they share the immigration/acculturation experience. Sometimes these bonds are formalized into school ethnic clubs; sometimes they grow to serve a very specific purpose like a study group. But most often they simply and essentially provide students with the only “home base” from which to forge their identities and bridge their cultures.

However, there is a price for this isolation. Honing the American side of their identity is hampered by lack of friendships or even access to U.S.-born peers.

“All the kids hang around with their own country people. I don’t have any friends who were born here. Our thinking is different from native students. We respect our parents, and we are not so open. We do not laugh at each other. If the native kids wouldn’t attack us with their hatred it would be easier. If I stay so different my life here will be hard. I would like to have a friend. Maybe an American friend might help me find my way around.”

9th grade Mexican girl, immigrated at age 13

Very few of the students we talked to had such a friend, although many, in answers to questions about what might have helped them overcome the difficulties in their first few years here, expressed this same wish to have an American friend to guide them and show them how things are done.

Prejudices and hostility against them teach immigrant students that such intolerance is part of the social fabric of America. And they learn to participate.



"I know now how to act here. When I came they would fight and call us wetbacks — here at school and in the street. Now with our anger we fight back. They call us wetbacks and we call them niggers. Everyone hates."

10th grade Mexican boy, immigrated at age 14

"I am not even Chinese and they call me Chink. It gets me so mad. Some of my friends just walk away, but I cannot. I am a troublemaker when that happens. I fight back hard. My father says not to fight. But I feel ashamed to just turn my back."

10th grade Vietnamese boy, immigrated at age 11

A San Diego study documented the strong resentments and prejudice against Indochinese students, particularly in the middle schools, and found common patterns of escalating conflict between the groups. These often result in fights and suspensions. Although there was an overall declining suspension rate in the city's schools, there was a 22% increase in the suspension of Asian students — the sharpest increase in the middle and junior high schools where it was 46% for Indochinese students (primarily because of fights with non-Indochinese students). This study documents what other districts reported anecdotally.

Patterns of prejudice, conflict and social isolation have implications for the academic progress of immigrant students. Informal English language development becomes difficult for the isolated newcomer. Asked what language they speak with their friends, two thirds said either their native language alone, or some combination of English and native language. Spanish-speaking immigrant students are more likely to use only their native language, reflective of the larger clusters of these students in most schools. Southeast Asian students whose languages include a variety of Indochinese languages and dialects are less likely to find themselves in large clusters of their own linguistic group, and thus use their native language socially far less often.

Language is best developed where there is a strong motivation for communication. When a new language cannot be used in a socially safe situation — in friendships — it takes much longer to learn.

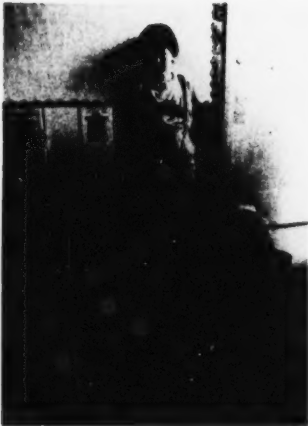
"There is lots of teasing me when I don't pronounce right. Whenever I open my mouth I wonder, I shake and worry, will they laugh? They think if we speak Tagalog that we are saying something bad about them, and sometimes they fight us for speaking our language. I am afraid to speak English, I am afraid to even try. And I find myself with fear about speaking Tagalog."

10th grade Filipino boy, immigrated at age 14

"At first I was shy, but I didn't have problems making friends because in my ESL class were kids from all over the world. I saw the Chinese people, and the Vietnamese people, and I felt like we were all together. I was like one of them, and I wanted to be able to talk to them. That's what made me try so hard to learn English. But in other classes, when I was laughed at because of my poor English, I didn't want to talk."

Cesar Menjivar, Salvadoran immigrant student
Public Testimony, San Francisco

Immigrant children come to the schools anxious to make friends and succeed in their land. This desire can be supported or it can be killed by the social climate of the schools.



RESOURCES

Throughout the state, some schools have developed systems for rumor control, mediation and conflict resolution when problems have arisen with intergroup relations. The contacts listed here have been particularly responsive to intergroup relations involving immigrant students, or are innovative models for dealing with inter-race relations.

Irvine High School in Irvine Unified School District has developed a series of videotapes presenting the experiences and conflicts facing immigrant and ethnic minority students. The topics include: introduction of a new immigrant child to a class, immigrant students speaking their native language in an English class, bilingual students translating for a non-English speaking student, and general discussion of students of different ethnicities about identity. These videos are presented by older students to each freshman class as a focus for discussion and increasing awareness about what it is like to be an immigrant and an ethnic minority. The videotapes are available for purchase at a cost of \$80/tape.

Contact
Bruce Baron
Irvine Unified School District
5050 Barranca Parkway
Irvine, CA 92714
(714) 651-0444

San Diego Unified School District has a strong district-wide coordinated Intergroup Relations effort which was originally established as a result of a court-ordered desegregation plan. The program includes a staff development component for all staff members in the district to receive ongoing training in intergroup relations, teacher expectations, personal awareness of ethnicity, creating a positive learning environment for students from all ethnic groups, and conflict resolution. In addition, a district developed race/human relations/conflict resolution curriculum has been infused into the district social studies curriculum for all grade levels.

Contact
Francine Williams, Director
Community Relation and Integration Services
San Diego City Schools
4520 Pocahontas Avenue
San Diego, CA 92117-3710
(619) 483-3925

The Student Panels Project at Oakland's Fremont High School is initiated and funded by Conciliation Forums of Oakland, a community based conflict resolution organization. The Project provides a neutral ground for all students to negotiate and discuss issues that arise from racial/ethnic conflicts. Students involved in racial incidents meet to talk about their cases in front of a student panel whose members have been trained as volunteer conciliators.

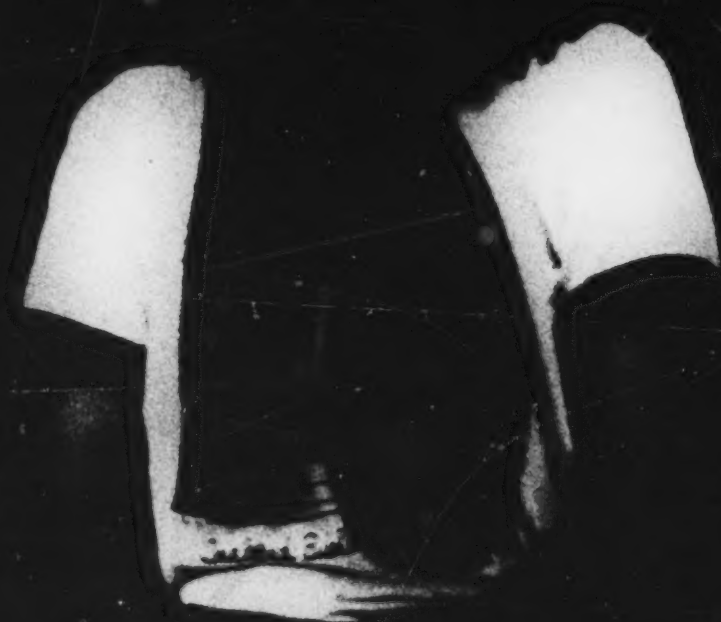
Contact
Millie Cleveland, Program Coordinator
Fremont High School
4610 Foothill Blvd.
Oakland, CA 94601
(415) 261-3240

The New Bridges Program, co-sponsored by the Center for Human Development and the National Conference of Christians and Jews, brings together young people in a summer intensive camp designed to build awareness of ethnic and cultural diversity, to find new ways to build bridges between people, and to find ways to make the experience part of their schools and communities. The program recruits groups of students from a school so the young people can continue to work together as a presence on their school campus. They also provide workshops for adult groups.

Contact
Ricky Sherover-Marcuse or
Hugh Vasquez, Co-Directors
New Bridges
3708 Mt. Diablo Blvd. Suite 214
Lafayette, California 94549
(415) 283-3104

"Immigrant children in our schools enter an educational system that's foreign, where the language is incomprehensible, where the faces of classmates are of many colors, and where parents feel unconnected and frustrated. It is alarming but not surprising that so many fail and drop out of school. While we talk about democracy and equal opportunity, in reality many of our students are barely given a chance to get out of the gate. The basic question is not how we can teach these students, but whether we really want to."

Rosario Anaya,
San Francisco School Board Member
Public Testimony, San Francisco



Legal mandates as well as humanitarian concern make clear our responsibility to provide an equitable and quality educational experience for the newcomer child. Over the past decade California's public schools have made significant headway in serving the needs of language minority children, but there is still far to go to meet the specific challenge of educating immigrant children. Existing programs are tremendously uneven from district to district as well as from school site to school site, with the majority faring far less than adequate.

This section explores the challenges facing school districts in meeting the needs of immigrant children, and describes the experiences of newcomer students in our school programs. Throughout these chapters, several overlying themes persistently arise regarding the barriers and problems faced by the districts: the level of commitment to teach and educate immigrant children, the political climate affecting or affected by that commitment, the lack of consensus on how to best approach this task, once it is understood, and the shortage of the trained and bilingual staff necessary.

"Immigration is how almost all of us arrived. Immigration is not the problem. The problem is when a society doesn't choose to make decisions and plans to ensure that the value of that diversity and mix enhances our society, and instead decides to pretend it isn't going on. At that point, immigration becomes a problem because there have been no adjustments in services, in the schools, in the communities. That is the problem we're facing now, but it doesn't have to be that way. We can see to it that things change."

Jackie Goldberg, Los Angeles School Board
Public Testimony, Los Angeles

We live at a time in history when U.S. society is rethinking its basic stance about protection of its borders, who to let in, and how to treat those who come. Additionally, most educational programs serving immigrant children fall under the rubric of bilingual education, support for which is steeped in a tense and hostile ideological debate. California's Bilingual Education Program was in fact vetoed by Governor Deukmejian as this report went into production. Proposition 63, the "English Only" initiative was passed by California voters in 1986. The federal Immigration Reform and Control Act, designed to control U.S. borders, came into effect in 1987. How we see ourselves as a people, how we can function as a society with a diverse and pluralistic population, our sense of national interests and international responsibility—these are profound questions that cultivate deeply emotional fears and hopes, and greatly affect policies and program implementation of educational services for immigrant children.

A strong and consistent research base indicates that properly staffed bilingual education—a combination of native language instruction for academic subjects with intensive English language development—is the most efficient approach for teaching limited English speaking children because it addresses both a child's academic development and language needs. (A full discussion of bilingual education begins on page 57). But we found that at the school district and school site levels negative feelings about bilingual education and providing services to the foreign born hamper the design and delivery of equal, accessible and appropriate programs. There are principals who refuse to identify language minority children because to do so would require providing them with bilingual services. There are bilingual programs operating in isolation from the rest of the school program and with scanty support or resources and a critical shortage of staff. We found, in general, much inflexibility or unwillingness on the parts

of schools to do more than what is minimally required by law to adjust curriculum, teaching approaches and services. Even compliance with the law has been problematic as attested to by hundreds of formal complaints to the State Department of Education and numerous public lawsuits. The contrast is marked between those few districts in the state that have accepted the challenge to integrate and educate foreign-born children, and those which are resisting the responsibility. Still, the legal mandate that we must educate these children is clear, as we will now outline, followed by a discussion of the funding which mediates a district's ability to fulfill the legal mandate.

Legal Mandates

A body of federal and state laws and court cases establish the responsibility of the public school system to educate children regardless of their immigrant status, national origin or spoken language. However, the chosen interpretation of the mandates and the extent to which they are implemented at individual schools varies tremendously. A "pull-out" program, where a child is tutored in her or his native language for 20 minutes once a week, is a response in one school to implementing the same laws which prompt a full comprehensive bilingual academy in another. The demographic mix in any particular district, the political attitudes within a community, the history of serving immigrant children within the district, and increasing pressure on school budgets affect the vastly different levels of services and responses from district to district throughout the state. In short, the law says one thing—the reality is too often another.

The following laws provide the framework for the education of limited English proficient children:

Title VI of the federal Civil Rights Act of 1964 states "no person shall be subjected to discrimination on the basis of race, color or national origin," and requires school districts to take "affirmative steps" to rectify language deficiency which may prevent national-origin minority children from effective participation in educational programs. By 1970, in response to many complaints about noncompliance with this law, the federal Office of Civil Rights advised local school districts that they had responsibilities under the law to take affirmative steps in four areas: rectifying the English language deficiency of a child; providing access to college preparatory courses; assuring that ability groups due to the special language needs of national origin minority children must meet those needs as quickly as possible and not operate as permanent tracks; and notifying parents in their home language of school activities.

The *Lau vs. Nichols* U.S. Supreme Court decision of 1974 ruled that every student must have equal access to education, and that such access cannot be denied to students with limited English proficiency. In response to a lawsuit by Chinese parents against the San Francisco Unified School District, the court determined that merely providing LEP students with the same teachers, texts and curricula provided to English speakers did not constitute equal educational opportunity. The court ordered San Francisco to provide special instruction to make the educational program linguistically accessible to LEP students. The decision had national import. To implement it, the Office of Civil Rights established broad guidelines for instructional programs and for the integration of children belonging to ethnic and language minority groups. These guidelines (known as the Lau Remedies) prescribed transitional bilingual, bilingual/bicultural or bilingual/multicultural programs for the elementary schools. English as a Second Language was deemed appropriate for the secondary level. These remedies were not

accorded the weight of law, however, and in spite of a subsequent court mandate to develop official regulations, none have been issued by the administration to date.

At the state level, California's recently vetoed Bilingual Education Program was for 10 years one of the most comprehensive state compulsory bilingual programs in the nation. Established in response to the *Lau* decision, its goal was to meet two important needs of limited English speaking students: to learn English and to achieve academically at a level equal to their English speaking peers. The decade of its tenure was one of severe political tensions about bilingual education, and several legislative revisions to strengthen and modify the program.

Other national court cases have established that a child cannot be denied access to elementary or secondary education because of lack of legal immigrant status. At the K-12 public education level, *Plyler v. Doe* (1982 U.S. Supreme Court) assures access, underscored by a procedural and clarification memo issued by California Superintendent of Instruction Bill Honig in 1984.

Funding

None of these legal requirements are contingent upon receipt of special state or federal funding. It is each school district's responsibility to provide equitable and accessible educational programs to immigrant children with whatever resources are available to them including general purpose funds. This is, of course, an age of limits and scarce resources for the schools. California ranks 45th among all states in public school revenues as a function of the citizenry's personal income. It ranks 23rd among all states in the actual Average Daily Attendance (ADA) expenditure per pupil. Our student population is increasingly comprised of children with special educational needs just as resources become increasingly limited.

Funds for programs which serve the limited English speaking student and for special services for immigrants are pieced together by districts from several federal and state sources, each with its own restrictions and objectives. Actual expenditures cannot be precisely determined, however, because immigrant students may be eligible for funds from a variety of sources, and also because many of these sources serve a much broader population than immigrants. State funding for bilingual programs are included in Economic Impact Aid (EIA) categorical grants, but due to problems in the formula for allocation there is not a direct match between where the dollars go and where the limited English proficient students are. Federal monies are allocated on a competitive application basis and dispersed locally at the discretion of local school districts, resulting in a wide variation in the resources applied to services for immigrant students within a district and throughout the state.

State Funds:

While each public school student in California generates a specific amount of state ADA funding, these monies are dispersed at local discretion and do not directly fund any special educational services for immigrant students. In our sample, a very few districts specified that a portion of the LEP student-generated ADA go to language services. San Diego more than matches state funds for bilingual programs out of the district budget. In Stockton, the school district funds bonuses for bilingual teachers and purchases primary language texts out of district funds. But these examples are rare. Generally, any special assistance for immigrant and limited English speaking children is dependent upon special funding.

The major source of special state funds used by districts to support LEP and immigrant services is Economic Impact Aid (EIA). In addition, some districts have utilized the School

Improvement Program, Demonstration Programs in Reading and Math, the Miller Unruh Reading Program, and Urban Impact Aid. The most significant state funding source, EIA now combines what was once two different pots of money—compensatory education and bilingual education funds. In 1986-87, EIA provided \$196,952,000 to districts, although it is unknown what proportion of that was used for bilingual education.

The basic formula for allocating EIA funds to districts is based on *ethnicity* as an approximation of bilingual need, poverty levels and indices of transiency or high absenteeism. Ethnicity in California is not a good measure of language need or immigrant status (see discussion in Chapter I of this report) because of the presence of second, third and fourth generations within ethnic/language groups. Therefore, even in the state allocation formula intended to address language needs there is not in actuality a good match between language support needs and funding. A second check of districts which do not qualify for a basic grant *does* take LEP enrollment into consideration, but this only involves the smaller and less impacted districts.

EIA funds are allocated to local school districts on the basis of formula, and may then be distributed to various kinds of compensatory or bilingual programs at the discretion of the local district. This allocation often is even further removed from the need than the state's. It is discretionary whether a district uses LEP concentrations or numbers as a basis for distributing the funds to school sites. The political atmosphere about serving immigrant and limited English proficient students, and competition for scarce resources, often prevent needed funds from being funneled into programs serving immigrant children. While complicated by the inability to separate out EIA funds actually used for bilingual education as compared to compensatory



education, the dollar amounts per LEP student range significantly from a low of \$137 per LEP student in Orange County to a high of \$754 per LEP student in Tulare County. The average is \$446 per LEP student. Orange County, with over 8% of the state LEP population, receives only 3% of the EIA funds. Los Angeles, San Diego and San Mateo counties are also among the counties with larger LEP populations than their share of state EIA funds.

These data indicate our state funding formula for EIA is not adequately balanced to address the needs of the immigrant child. The changing demographics in the state mean also a shifting area of need. Poverty, ethnicity and transiency are still powerful indicators of need for compensatory education, but they don't address the issue of English language fluency as a barrier to participation in the full curriculum and program.

The single pot of funds for compensatory and bilingual education (particularly when they are not sufficient funding levels to begin with) exacerbates the feelings among different sectors of our society that newcomers are encroaching on scarce resources needed by the native born. The battle over resources weighs heavily in local political debates and tensions over the support of bilingual programs.

Federal Funding Sources:

The federal Bilingual Education Act which became Title VII of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act was passed by Congress in 1968. While not a mandate, the act established a program and resources for the support of a variety of educational programs for limited English speaking children. Since that time, other federal programs have aimed specifically at immigrant or refugee children's educational needs.

All four major sources of federal monies are short-term variable funds based on a voluntary application and competitive allocation process. There are two federal programs specifically for refugee and immigrant children: the Transitional Program for Refugee Children, and the Emergency Immigrant Education Program — between them providing close to \$20 million to California public schools in the last year. Chapter I and Title VII funds, while important sources of funding for limited English speaking children's services, serve much broader populations as well.

The Transitional Program for Refugee Children (TPRC), now being phased out completely, supported programs which provided supplemental educational services to officially designated "refugee" children here no more than two years in grades K-6, or no more than three years in grades 7-12. This source, though restricted to a relatively small percentage of immigrant children, provided critical native language support, teacher training and development of materials geared mostly towards Southeast Asian students.

The Emergency Immigrant Education Program (EIEP) provides federal financial assistance to school districts in which at least 500 students (or in small districts at least 3% of enrollment) are immigrant children here less than three years. Eighty school districts in California participated last year. The program was established in 1984, and funding has been extended until only 1989. Thus, two important sources of federal funds are coming to an end, while the need in the state is increasing.

The Migrant Education Program, part of federal Chapter 1, ECIA, is restricted to children whose parents are employed in agriculture or fishing industries — only about 3% of the immigrant student population in our schools. The funds are allocated directly to some school



districts as well as to 13 regional operating agencies. In California, close to \$80 million from this source provide educational and community support services for migrant children. Both the Migrant Education Program and the Emergency Immigrant Education Program require aggressive identification processes to document eligibility of students.

The final source of federal funds is ESEA Title VII, aimed at services for limited English speaking students, special transitional bilingual education programs, and model literacy programs for families. Approximately \$21 million in Title VII funds have been allocated to local districts in California this year. The districts in our sample relied heavily upon it for piloting and supporting programs for immigrant children and for teacher training. Title VII funds also provide the major source of support for the State Department of Education Bilingual Unit.

These funds have been essential for program development in California, but they are not distributed equitably and when funds run out districts which receive them have to figure out how to continue the programs. In some cases, the districts may take over support of all or a

portion of a program. In other cases, the programs simply end—having benefited a specific cohort of immigrant students, but having little impact beyond that on the overall services in a district.

Combining all major sources of funds addressing immigrant and limited English speaking children, we find again discrepancies from county to county, and district to district (see Table 10).

Comparing the percent of LEP students and the percent of funding to serve those students, we find that three counties in the state have a significantly larger LEP population than their share of the funding.

In addition to public sources of funding, we found some school districts benefiting from private foundation grants for programs for immigrant children. Several districts in the state under court ordered desegregation plans utilize desegregation funds for staff development, smaller class sizes, development of assessment approaches, and new curricula focused on the needs of immigrant children.

The aggressiveness and success of a district in garnering special federal funding and the politics and leadership in a district that affect the allocation of EIA funds determine resources available to serve immigrant children. The amount of resources available to provide needed services for a newcomer student is therefore dependent upon which school district that child lives in, and the particular school in which he enrolls.

**TABLE 10: Federal/State Funding per LEP Student by County
Ranked From Highest to Lowest, 1985-86**

County Name	Total LEP Students	Total EIA \$*	EIA \$/LEP Student	Total Funds** for LEP Special Services (\$)	Total Special Funds/LEP
Tulare	5219	\$1936811	\$754.32	\$9524859.88	\$1825.04
Kings	1870	1006381	538.17	2906074.10	1554.05
Fresno	12173	7690840	631.79	15503665.26	1273.61
Kern	6003	3749915	624.67	7391173.99	1231.25
Sonoma	1951	1273647	652.82	2400972.17	1230.64
Sacramento	8911	6490150	728.33	10881748.10	1221.16
Contra Costa	4510	3336914	739.89	5433686.99	1204.81
Yolo	2056	1078554	524.59	2328026.40	1132.31
Solano	2598	1257470	484.01	2574414.67	990.92
Madera	1347	834331	619.40	133414.27	989.91
Stanislaus	4568	2221780	486.38	4224523.95	924.81
Merced	4603	1742470	378.55	3976626.31	863.92
Santa Barbara	4317	1595461	369.58	3705060.52	858.25
Monterey	10746	2517882	234.31	8583509.00	798.76
San Joaquin	12781	4534241	354.78	10074977.87	788.28
Imperial	7764	1539969	198.35	5885957.00	758.11
San Bernardino	11063	6634669	599.72	8282815.11	748.70
Alameda	16726	10761635	643.41	12277258.67	734.02
Ventura	9847	2618410	265.91	7185312.03	729.70
Santa Clara	24295	8550811	351.96	16866383.80	694.23
San Francisco	18793	10270452	546.50	12664004.13	673.87
Riverside	11352	4920971	433.48	6687578.89	589.11
Santa Cruz	4796	1133664	236.38	2254101.01	470.00
San Mateo	8662	1629697	188.14	4011111.10	463.07
Los Angeles	240805	81828321	33981	98819371.57	410.33
San Benito	1359	288649	212.40	543852.71	400.19
San Diego	35640	7692961	215.85	11842178.01	332.27
Orange	43414	5952975	137.12	10992046.84	253.19

Counties with 1000 or more LEP students are included.

* State Economic Impact Aid

** Total Funds for LEP Student Special Services include EIA, Title VII, Migrant, Emergency Immigrant Education Program (EIEP) and Transitional Program for Refugee Children (TPRC) funds.

Source: California State Department of Education.

Inequitable Resource Allocation

Support of services for the immigrant child is inadequate across the board — but the problem is exacerbated in many areas of the state where immigrants are disproportionately enrolled in the schools with the least ability to serve them.

The residential patterns of immigrants are that they tend to settle in the most populated and poor areas of the cities. Thus their children are disproportionately placed in schools that are overcrowded and plagued by other problems such as fewer credentialed or less trained teachers, more substitutes, higher absenteeism among students and staff, poorer family resources among students, and worse facilities. (See Chapter 1 for discussion of school size.) The inequities are great enough to have led to lawsuits in some cities.

"The typical immigrant family tends to settle in cities and the poorer parts of town. What does this mean in terms of the school a child is likely to attend? Likely to be old and very poorly maintained. It is likely to be overcrowded and short in supplies. Likely to have large numbers of teachers that speak only English, and a disproportionate number of teachers with limited experience, limited credentials or both. Likely to have a lot of teachers that don't show up, thus there is likely to be a lot of substitute teachers. He is very likely to get very little English language instruction, and get it from a person who has had very little training in English as a Second Language. If he gets any assistance at all in his own language, he is likely to get it from an aide who himself is limited in educational background. We're challenging the unequal allocation of resources within a district. Everyone knows that East Oakland isn't Piedmont, that East Los Angeles isn't Beverly Hills. That's the reality. But is that the way it ought to be?"

Peter Roos, Attorney
Public Testimony, San Francisco

RESOURCES

EdSource, formerly the California Coalition for Fair School Finance, is a non-profit organization which provides information to the public on school finance and related issues and trends affecting resources for California's K-12 education system. EdSource offers timely publications, rents and sells audiovisual presentations, and hosts an annual conference.

Contact
Barbara Levin, Executive Director
EdSource
525 Middlefield Road, Suite 100
Menlo Park, CA 94025

The California Movement for Education Reform (CMER) is a grassroots, non-profit advocacy organization formed to preserve and promote public education as a top priority for the state. The group works to develop an adequate and stable funding base for the K-12 educational system.

Contact
California Movement for Education Reform
2701 K Street #3
Sacramento, California 95816
(916) 441-6105

The State Department of Education (Bilingual Education Unit) publishes a list of projects in California schools which are recipients of ESEA Title VII funding for bilingual education.

Contact
Bilingual Education Office
State Department of Education
721 Capitol Mall
Sacramento, CA 95814

Immigration waves do not coincide neatly with the rhythm of the school year. Immigrant children arrive at the school house door every day. Districts with large numbers or concentrations of immigrants are faced daily with having to register, assess and place newcomer students in programs that somehow start them along the road to achievement and fulfillment in their new land. It is no easy task.

There are three basic critical elements that must exist for any child to be well served in the schools. First, the child's needs must be identified and assessed adequately, as this chapter will address. Second, the child must be provided with a high-quality program appropriate to the student's needs and staffed by appropriately trained teachers with high expectations and the capability to communicate with the student (discussed in Chapter 6). And third, there must be adequate bridges between home and school so that the child's educational involvement is mutually supported (see Chapter 7). For immigrant children all too often there are huge deficiencies in these needs.

"It was too hard for me. I didn't know anything. I didn't know the ABCs or the arithmetic and I felt so stupid. I should have been in 1st or 2nd grade, not in the 5th. I told my parents I want to change, but the teacher said no because it depends on your age. I cried because I didn't understand."

9th grade Lao child, immigrated at age 10

"I wasn't in the right grade because I think I should have been in 11th or 12th. They said because of my English I had to be in 10th. I didn't care because you need credits to go to college so I have to do it even though the work was too easy for me. For my first two years here I did all the work I did back in the Philippines all over again."

12th grade Filipino student,
immigrated at age 17

"For me, they shouldn't have put me in Basic Math. I should have been in Algebra. But there is more English vocabulary in Algebra so they said I couldn't take it until I learned more English. I felt I was spending time with things I already knew, but then that's required of Latin immigrants. We waste our time because we don't know English yet."

11th grade Mexican student,
immigrated at age 14

Perhaps the most critical process that determines an immigrant child's school experience is that of early identification of needs, assessment of the appropriate academic program matched to those needs, and placement in such a program. However, we found tremendous variation in commitment to identifying limited English speaking children and in the resources and thoroughness put into assessment and placement.

Too often, age or English language proficiency are the sole considerations for a child's placement. Forty percent of our student sample believed they were not placed at the right grade level. Many found themselves, because of their limited English fluency, in classes repetitious of academic material already learned, or in classes based on their ages, regardless of their academic deficiencies. For example, assessed on English language fluency only, a non-English

speaking 14-year-old from Japan with a rigorous prior education might need a calculus class, but be placed with a non-English speaking Lao child with only two years of schooling in his life. Such inappropriate placements lead to academic and social problems for immigrant children.

"I would like to address the inadequate placement and assessment policy for refugee children. The schools have generally placed children by age. If you are a certain age, you go to a certain grade. For the refugees, many students have spent years in camps where their education was interrupted — there's no school over there. And some have never gone to school, so when they come here and are placed by age, they face not only the language problem, they face the gap of information and knowledge which is not easily remedied. For the younger children it can probably be remedied quickly, but for the older child it is



very difficult. It is to the credit of the students that so many have succeeded so far. I want to suggest a policy of placement based on proficiency rather than on age, which would require a fairly extensive battery of testing on many subjects, not just English ability. And then we place them appropriate to their proficiency but also give them remedial education and help to expedite the catching up process."

Vu-Duc Vuong, Executive Director
Center for Southeast Asian Resettlement
Public Testimony, San Francisco

Identification

The first step relied upon in identifying children who might have trouble participating in the regular English taught instructional program is usually the Home Language Survey—filled out upon registration at school. If a family's answer to any one question on the survey indicates they speak a language other than English in the home, the children should be further assessed as soon as possible. But this does not always occur. School secretaries and office staff are often responsible for seeing that the Home Language Survey is completed, including interpreting to parents the meaning of the questions. Frequently untrained and uninformed as to the import of the survey, many of these staff persons leave the forms blank or fill them out simply on the basis of their own guesses about a child's English fluency.

In our public hearings we learned that often if a child can say the ABC's or answer a few questions in English she or he may be assumed English fluent. Although it was impossible to document the extent of such practices, reports from the field also indicate that there are situations in which staff or principals who do not believe in bilingual education or special services for immigrant children simply neglect to identify or report students with limited English proficiency. There is no state monitoring, and usually no local monitoring of LEP assessment.

Assessment

Districts differ tremendously in how quickly after identification a child is assessed and placed into an appropriate educational program. According to the State Department of Education, the largest area of non-compliance with the state Bilingual Education Program was in this area, including failure to assess children in their native language within 90 days of enrollment. Shortages of assessment staff, or simply lack of commitment or understanding about the importance of assessment all contribute to this problem.

Therefore, depending on the district, assessment may be a very quick conversational evaluation by an untrained staff person of a child's English speaking ability, it may include use of one or several standardized tests focusing on language skills, it may include full evaluation of literacy and academic background in both native language and in English, and it may include all of this plus additional health and mental health screening. The variation is tremendous—but the norm is minimal assessment including only evaluation of English fluency. Prior educational background, as well as health and mental health status are important factors in the kind of supports and services a child may need to participate in the standard curriculum.

Some of the identification and assessment processes we saw in the field are thoroughly comprehensive—serving as models nationally. Combining the best of these, we have formulated a model intake and assessment program:

Assessment occurs within the first few weeks of enrollment in school.

Assessment is done by staff with the language skills to communicate with registering students and their parents in the native language of the family.

Assessment staff are trained, aware and sensitive to the backgrounds and experiences of the incoming immigrant student population, and have comparative knowledge of the United States and other countries' educational systems.

Good coordination and communication exists between assessors and school site personnel (teachers, administrators and counselors) where the child is placed.

Regular inservice training and staff-sharing sessions take place to ensure the highest quality state of the art assessment procedures.

Program coordinates with and regularly utilizes community and service agencies for support and referral.

Evaluation encompasses English language oral proficiency, native language oral proficiency, reading and writing proficiency in both languages (for those arriving after 2nd grade), math and basic skill assessment, prior educational background and Special Education screening.

A health unit is on-site or nearby to administer immunizations, TB screening, kindergarten physical exams, and to evaluate special health problems that may present barriers to learning (hearing tests, eye tests).

The assessment program has constant and good communication with district administrators both to provide information as a planning tool for programs and to ensure that the assessment program has proper support.

Parents and students are provided orientation in their native language about the United States school system, the assessment and placement process, expectations and services.

Student progress at the school site is monitored, with ongoing assessment as necessary.

In order to come close to this model, many districts are moving towards development of some kind of centralized intake and assessment system. Considered both administratively and economically more efficient and accurate, these allow for concentration of resources and staff, less lag time between registration and placement, completion of the process in one location by a staff with the communication skills to involve parents, and close contact and support among assessment staff. Some districts in our sample had developed central intake centers and close to half expressed plans to develop them. Often the impetus comes from overwhelmed school sites.

"On a daily basis we were in contact with schools, hearing 'there are 300 families at our doors and they all speak Cambodian. They don't speak English and they want to register their children. What do we do?' We knew we needed to assess their language, find out



their previous health history, get affidavits of responsibility and affidavits of birth because they had no papers with them. Well, after hundreds and hundreds of those kinds of calls from schools, the only answer was to centrally locate it and staff it with the kind of people that could pull this kind of operation off. It took mostly a lot of commitment and hard work and strong recruitment efforts to get the staff together, but we did it."

Martha Estrada
Long Beach Intake Center

However, the size of the district and the distribution of the immigrant populations within the community affect the feasibility and appropriateness of centralized intake. The larger the geographic area served by a district, and the more spread out the immigrant population, the more problematic it becomes. Mobile vans, or establishing several intake centers may be preferable in those situations.

Reports from the field indicate that a disproportionately high number of LEP students are referred for Special Education. This may occur because inappropriately placed students in a regular program, not proficient enough in English to communicate or understand what is going on, lead some teachers to assume learning disabilities. It may occur because the cultural forms of behavior aren't understood by the classroom teacher leading to erroneous conclusions about a child's learning ability. However, some immigrant children certainly need Special Education placement; there are indications that war trauma can lead to physical disabilities which affect learning, as well as emotional problems. Appropriately placed or not however, the limited English proficient child in Special Education is seldom adequately served. Trained bilingual Special Education staff who can conduct culturally sensitive evaluations are in even shorter supply than in the regular program, and very few bilingual Special Education psychologists or teachers are found in the state. Yet, thorough assessment services for the limited English speaking must include accurate Special Education screening.

Comprehensive assessment requires adequate tools. Standardized primary language tests are difficult to find, and while some districts have developed their own, others simply do without for many of the language groups. Communication between districts must be strengthened; for example, while intake staff in one district might complain to us that no assessment materials are available in Tagalog, another district not too far away would boast that they had developed an excellent one.

Placement

The link between a child's assessment and placement in a school program is generally weak. Even among those districts with good assessment and diagnostic systems, some either don't have the appropriate program options for placement or simply do not adequately make the connection between assessment and the delivery of services. As mentioned earlier, often a child who speaks no English but is ready for, say, physics is placed with a child who also speaks no English but needs very basic science concepts and skills. In most school districts the program options for each of these children simply don't exist, even though placing them together may doom one to failure and low self-esteem and the other to boredom and limits on academic development. A fifth of the students in our sample felt that because of lack of English language proficiency they were placed in classes that were far too easy for them and which repeated material they had covered already.

In the absence of program options, age placement becomes the next most prevalent placement policy after English language fluency. But the lockstep age/grade system is not easily adaptable to the mix of educational backgrounds brought by immigrant children. Children immigrating in the teen years find themselves unable to meet graduation requirements or college entrance requirements when placed by age. They may in fact need much more time in the system, although being placed with younger students may be difficult socially. For some 21% of our student sample, placement by age meant having to overcome massive educational and skills gaps due to little prior education.

Placement by age, placement by English proficiency, or placement by academic need are difficult issues to address when the program options aren't available to tailor a program to the specific needs of each immigrant child. These decisions become increasingly difficult the older the age of a child entering the school system. Program flexibility and options are also more constrained in the higher grades. Yet the reality is that immigrant children come to us with tremendous range in their academic needs; and each inappropriate placement denies children the education which is their right.

Districts with good communication between assessment program staff, teachers and the administration, and which are committed to serving the needs of immigrant children, have found themselves needing to create new programs targetting the complexity of needs the regular school program doesn't accommodate. Some tackle the need for a more comprehensive and intensive approach to English language development and native language support for high school students — others the needs of teenagers arriving with large academic deficiencies. They all (by design or caveat) are confronted with the need to respond to the social and emotional issues of transition as well. Assessment is the crucial point for identifying such program needs.

RESOURCES

Alhambra School District has established a centralized comprehensive intake and assessment system. One center focuses on elementary grades (K-8); the other on secondary (9-12). Both sites provide on-site programs for health examinations, and survival English language development for immigrant students who have very large academic and English language deficiencies.

Contact

Dr. Ed Lee, Elementary Center Director
Scott Magnusson,
Secondary Center Director
Orientation Center
15 West Alhambra Road
Alhambra, CA 91801
(818) 308-2200

Long Beach Unified School District has one of the longest established centralized intake and assessment centers in the nation. The center includes an on-site health unit as well as full academic and background assessment processes. They serve a wide array of language and national groups, but have developed an unusual expertise in serving children from Southeast Asia. Recently, the center has added a component which serves all LEP students through centralized resources and specialists who follow up on the students once placed at individual school sites.

Contact

Dr. Michael P. Garcia
Program Administrator
Long Beach Unified School District
Assignment Center and LEP Services Center
701 Locust Avenue
Long Beach, CA 90813
(213) 591-9571

The school program for immigrant children should include four major components to prepare them to participate fully in the regular school curriculum and activities.

Intensive English language instruction must be provided for both access to an English taught academic curriculum and social communication.

It must be ensured that limited English speaking children continue to learn content subjects while developing English skills, and that they receive support in compensating for any deficiencies in their prior education and in bridging the gap to the skills and content already acquired by U.S.-born peers. This includes providing solid native language instruction and support while the student is still unable to fully partake of an English taught curriculum.

Cultural orientation should be given immigrant children so they may negotiate their way through a school day and program.

Special needs of foreign born children related to their immigrant experiences present barriers to school involvement which must be addressed programatically.



The Academic Program

Immigrant children need intensive English language instruction combined with strong academic support in their native language to be able to participate equally and effectively in the English taught curriculum. Yet the vast majority of immigrant students are not educated in such a program.

The academic program which served almost all immigrant students for the past decade was governed by the state's Bilingual Education Program, vetoed by Governor Deukmejian in 1987. While in most people's minds the Bilingual Education Program and the bilingual classroom are synonymous, in fact, a minority of children in the state program were actually in a bilingual classroom receiving both English language development and native language instruction.

A critical bilingual staffing shortage, political debate about bilingual programs, and problems implementing bilingual classrooms where students of a single language group and academic level can be clustered, have all prevented the implementation of bilingual classrooms.

In many districts and schools, the prevailing attitude towards teaching immigrant students is "Let them learn English first, then they can learn everything else." But learning English sufficiently to use as a tool in academic concept acquisition takes years (usually three to seven) for most students.

"The fact is, it takes time to learn English. No matter what you do with them, whether you put them in a special classroom and teach them English and provide a lot of support. It still takes time. But we cannot forego learning other content areas while they're in the process of acquiring English. Some put a child in a class for a year or two to learn English and meanwhile forget learning math, forget art, forget social studies. I don't think we can do that. I think we simply have to be more patient and know that it may take one child five years to become proficient, it may take another child ten years. Our goal is the same, though — to educate."

Vicky Campos, Bilingual Specialist
Orange Unified School District

California's Bilingual Education Program required the establishment of program options for the development of English fluency, and in most cases, primary language support to facilitate understanding of the core curriculum for children who don't sufficiently understand the English language instruction. Flexibility in the law allowed districts with bilingual staffing shortages to obtain waivers. In some circumstances, districts wishing to provide non-bilingual instruction could do so, but they still were required by law to assess language needs and provide LEP students with a comprehensive educational program designed to meet their needs and staffed by appropriately trained teachers utilizing materials and approaches addressing the LEP child. In reality, the legal mandate of the state Bilingual Education Program was translated to encompass a vast array of approaches and options at the local level, most of them without adequate support, staffing or materials. Now, since the veto of the program lifted the mandate, the implementation of even these programs is at the discretion of the districts and schools, and it remains to be seen whether districts will voluntarily move in the direction of forging truly excellent programs of best benefit to immigrant and LEP children.

Among the program options available to districts under the rubric of Bilingual Education at the K-6 level have been:

Bilingual Classroom: Taught by a credentialed bilingual teacher, these classes mix limited English proficient children (of a single language group) with fluent English speaking children and provide instruction in both languages aimed at providing a core curriculum and developing bilingualism in all students. These were required whenever more than 10 students of a single language group were clustered within a grade level at a school site.

Individual Learning Plans (ILPs): Children receive a minimum of 20 minutes a day of special language assistance. This can be a pull-out program or part of the regular classroom. It may be provided by a bilingual teacher, an aide or a language development specialist.

Planned Variation Class: This allows districts to experiment with alternatives to the bilingual classroom with classroom models that in some way address English language acquisition and the academic needs of the limited English proficient student. This includes approaches such as sheltered English (see page 65), immersion programs and others.

For students above the 6th grade, there have been two basic program options:

Language Development Classes: Students receive instruction for one or more periods a day focused on English language development. This may be taught by a bilingual teacher, aide or language development specialist, but the methods of instruction are up to the school. The most common approach is English as a Second Language (ESL) (see page 61).

Individual Learning Plan: An individual plan is developed for the student. The amount of assistance and method of delivery as well as staffing varies tremendously among schools and districts.

In the last year, 7% of all identified limited English proficient students were not served by any of these programs at all. That is, they were simply placed in the regular school curriculum with no special efforts geared at either their English language acquisition or academic support to help them overcome the language barrier. This is both illegal and vastly unfair to the student.

- **Bilingual Classrooms: Good Models, Seldom Implemented**

Two out of every five identified limited English proficient students in California were being served in some kind of designated bilingual program during our study. This encompassed



only 50% of the K-6 LEP students and only 18% of their grade 7-12 counterparts. These programs included bilingual classrooms, where both English and the child's native language are utilized as the language of instruction; full-day immersion programs, where English is the only language of instruction but the grouping and teaching approach are designed specifically for limited English speaking children; language development classes; and sheltered English content classes.

The majority of bilingual classrooms are for Spanish speaking children. The critical quota of children of a single language group at a grade level within a school site necessary to establish a bilingual classroom occurs far less often for other language groups. In reality, only half of these classrooms are actually staffed by a bilingual teacher. Transitional bilingual classrooms are set up so as the LEP child's English proficiency increases, the amount of instructional time spent in the native language is decreased. Most bilingual classrooms in the state are transitional, the goal being to mainstream the child into an English-taught curriculum as soon as possible. The use of a child's native language for instruction is seen as a vehicle for learning, not the goal in itself. In a very few cases, districts offer bilingual schools and programs where retainment of children's native languages and full bilingual literacy are the goals.

Instructional methods used in bilingual classrooms differ a great deal because in recent years the field of bilingual education has experienced tremendous and rapid growth and discovery, and not all bilingual educators have had a chance to catch up. The variation in methods and the tense political atmosphere surrounding bilingual education have made large-scale comparative evaluations difficult. But as previously mentioned, consistent research indicates more and more clearly that a well-staffed and implemented bilingual classroom, in which the LEP child studies cognitive subjects such as history and social studies in his or her native language in combination with English language instruction, is very effective for these children's academic preparation.

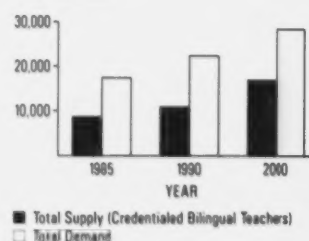
However, in many districts a critical shortage of trained bilingual teachers, counselors and aides has made bilingual programs difficult to implement and has drastically upset the success of bilingual programs and the students who need them. This is the most universally reported problem throughout the state. To provide the primary language support needed by immigrant students at all levels, specially credentialed staff are desperately needed, but in district after district where we did our research, we found that need going unmet (see Table 11).

Less than one quarter of the limited English proficient students were in a classroom staffed with bilingual teachers in the 1986-87 school year. The other three quarters received minimal, if any, primary language support. During that year, 7,000 elementary school bilingual teacher waivers were applied for and approved by districts needing to staff their bilingual classes, resulting in highly compromised educational programs for LEP students.

"If they're lucky they get into a bilingual program with a full bilingual teacher. If they're not so lucky, they go into one of those individual learning plans. And what do they get? They get minimal ESL service. If they are lucky, they get an aide who speaks their language."

Ligaya Avenida, Coordinator
Bilingual Education
San Francisco Unified School District

TABLE 11: Bilingual Teacher Supply and Demand



SOURCE: California Assembly Office of Research, Education Unit, 1985

Even as the demand for bilingual teachers increases with our changing population, there has actually been an exodus of credentialed bilingual staff from the schools. Certification as a bilingual teacher requires several supplemental years of training, and indeed most of these teachers are highly motivated and committed. However, the stresses of working in minimally supported programs and overcrowded classrooms with students of incredibly diverse educational and emotional needs are tremendous, and frequently reported as reasons for leaving the field. Bilingual educators' skills are very marketable in the private sector at salaries higher than what is offered by the public schools.

This shortage is particularly acute for Indochinese languages, even with the great majority of teachers for these groups on waiver. Districts which because of geography, pay scales and reputation are considered less desirable places to work have an even more difficult time attracting bilingual teachers. Determined districts compete by using a variety of recruitment approaches including widespread advertising, bonus stipends or pay schedules, or offering reduced class sizes or extra prep time.

"This year we added 15 teachers to our bilingual/ESL staff because of the big increase in LEP students. These people are not, for the most part, trained. I'm sure if you look closely at the staff of most bilingual/ESL programs you'll find the same problem—very few trained language development teachers. This means that even though our students depend upon good teaching so they can catch up with other students, so they can do well in the regular classroom—what they get are teachers who don't really know how to do it. The attitude is often 'If you can speak English, you can teach it' or 'If you know the kids' language you can teach them even if you aren't a teacher or don't know the subject.' The priority has to be training."

Margaret Brindle, ESL Chair
Mission High School, San Francisco

When there are insufficient numbers of trained bilingual teachers, districts increasingly rely on bilingual aides to provide primary language support. There, too, the shortage and training issues are critical—particularly in certain language groups.

Bilingual aide recruitment particularly suffers because of the low pay and status, lack of a career ladder, and few hours of work districts can offer. Although they are relied upon heavily, most aides have no training in education, language acquisition or the subjects they are supposed to help the students understand. Efforts to help aides become trained as teachers have run into obstacles with the California Basic Educational Skills Test (CBEST), and English language proficiency requirements—thus cutting out an important potential resource of teachers with the primary language skills to teach immigrant children.

In the absence of sufficient bilingual teachers, most "bilingual" classrooms end up with an English as a Second Language teaching approach with little primary language assistance or development.

Program design and policies should be based upon basic research which points to the superior effectiveness of approaches that build on a child's native language skills. Because of the transferability of language skills, time spent learning in the native language is not lost time in developing English skills. Reading skills acquired in the native language transfer readily to English and, according to the research, create a stronger reading capacity for the child.



- **Individual Learning Plans**

More than half of LEP students in California were served by individual learning plans – varying at the districts’ discretion from extensive tutoring and primary language support to 20 minutes a week with an untrained aide. In some cases in our sample, the entire ILP consisted of a community person who came once a week for half an hour to speak with the child in his or her native language. This level of assistance was common:

“A Vietnamese lady at my school helped me. She is not a teacher, but it was very lonesome without her and I smiled on the days she came. She was the only person who helped me to learn. No one else spoke my language. She would read the book with me and try to figure out what it meant. Sometimes she didn’t know either. The rest of the time I drew pictures because I couldn’t understand what was going on.”

7th grade Vietnamese boy, immigrated at age 8

Still a well-planned, supported and staffed ILP can be a good program option; simply, it rarely is. As the majority of the limited English proficient population is served by ILPs, more effective models and stronger monitoring is necessary.

- **English as a Second Language (ESL)**

English as a Second Language is a specialized English language instruction class for students whose primary language is other than English. The teaching is directed towards communication and literacy in English; the child’s native language is not used. The majority of secondary level LEP students (grades 7–12), take ESL classes for one (in some cases two) periods a day.

ESL is an important component of an immigrant child’s educational program which teaches English well when presented by properly trained teachers, but there are limitations.

When ESL alone comprises the entire effort to address language barriers for a limited English proficient child, it is simply not enough; it teaches English, but it does not assist students in learning their core academic subjects. ESL for one hour a day is often simply too little to meet students' urgent English language needs, or not implemented effectively. The classes are not generally articulated with core academic classes, causing transition problems for the student. Finally, the majority of ESL students are several years behind their peers in academic subjects. These issues can be best resolved by additionally providing students with quality bilingual instruction as part of their school day.

But unfortunately, the rest of the day for most LEP students is spent in regular classes taught in English and targeted for students with fluent English proficiency. Thus, with the exception of the ESL periods, the school experience is primarily a "sink or swim" experience taught by teachers with no ESL training and no time to provide special attention to the limited English speaking student:

"I just sat in my classes and didn't understand anything. Sometimes I would try to look like I knew what was going on, sometimes I would just try to think about a happy time when I didn't feel stupid. My teachers never called on me or talked to me. I think they either forgot I was there or else wish I wasn't. I waited and I waited, thinking someday I will know English."

9th grade Mexican girl, immigrated at age 13

ESL classes generally provide an important haven for the newly arrived immigrant child—a place to try out English without fear of being laughed at, a place where the teacher will take the time to be sure they understand what is occurring.

"My ESL teacher helped me a lot in my first year here. I could relax there. I wasn't afraid. She told me not to be afraid to talk and she helped me. In my other classes I was always confused and lost and I didn't want to ask anything because of my bad English. There were others like me in my ESL class and so we comforted each other about how lonely and strange it was."

10th grade Mexican girl, immigrated at age 12

"My first school I didn't want to go, just to stay home. When I went I just sat there and didn't understand anything. Two times a week a nice lady came and took me to the book room. But the rest of the time no one talked to me and I couldn't say anything. I didn't know what was going on. My second school had an ESL teacher who taught me from the ABCs and helped me learn many more things. She was so nice and smiled at me."

11th grade Cambodian boy, immigrated at age 11

While most of the students in our sample expressed appreciation and gratitude for their ESL classes in the first year or two, they complained about the classes after the initial period of adjustment, focusing on several factors: the low image of ESL among their peers, the quality of the instruction, the only non-college requirement credits given for the class, and being grouped with other limited English students. The nagging issue is whether or not the ESL program is a lower track.

"When I entered the regular English classes I found they were much more difficult than the ESL classes. It made me feel that I didn't walk, but jumped from the ESL to regular classes. I had to study very, very hard to recover the gap. So, I hope that schools can have a better ESL program so the transition is easier."

12th grade Chinese girl, immigrated at age 13

ESL students often feel embarrassment over being labelled "ESL," and a pressure to be reclassified. Once they learn a little English, they are anxious to leave the ESL class behind.

"Here ESL is a bad word to be called. At first I like ESL because the other kids and the teacher were nice to me not knowing English. But I want to get out now."

9th grade Vietnamese girl,
immigrated at age 13

"I was in an ESL class with all Spanish kids. My sister and I were the only Koreans. The Spanish kids talked Spanish. I was confused, was this a Spanish class or an English class? As soon as I learned a little English I had my mother arrange for me to get out of those classes. I felt better when I wasn't viewed as an ESL student."

11th grade Korean girl, immigrated at age 15

"I was two years in ESL and I didn't like it. My English level was not that low, but they treat you like your level is so low and you are stupid. My teacher wouldn't test me out. I wasted two years. I had to take a double load of English to fulfill college requirements. I just daydreamed in ESL because it was not challenging."

12th grade Salvadoran girl,
immigrated at age 14



Still, it is clear that ESL is an essential component of an immigrant student's program, along with tutoring, other methods of grouping and instruction which provide a smaller adult/student ratio, a slower pace, a focus on language development and acquisition, and a "safe" environment. A core school curriculum and program could provide for these needs, but seldom does.

"It's very frustrating. I didn't feel good. I couldn't really adjust to life here. I felt really dumb. I would sit in class and not understand anything. I went home and tried to read but had to look up every word in my dictionary. I spent hours reading each page. Sometimes I just gave up. The teacher didn't expect me to do anything. I was most fearful to get my report card."

10th grade Mexican girl, immigrated at age 14

While pressure to be reclassified and mainstreamed out of ESL can be intense for the students, so is the pressure for programs to turn out English fluent students within a few years. In spite of knowledge that full English language fluency can take years, the persistent tendency is to turn limited English speaking children into the mainstream program before they are ready. Ease in learning English varies by the background of the immigrant child. Those with a strong literate background in their native language can learn English much faster than a child whose native language skills are poorly developed. The educational level of a child's parents can also make a big difference. It is extremely rare for continuing supports (tutoring, follow-up assessment, primary language help) to continue to be available to these students after they are reclassified.

"We know that the kind of English we are talking about is not just fluency, being able to converse, being able to make small talk. We're talking about academic English, the English you need to do well in college, the English you need to evaluate, criticize, voice your opinion. That kind of English requires a lot of study and requires a certain amount of cultural literacy in the American context. It takes time to acquire it. We know for a fact that what these kids most need is time — time in the school system."

Paul Cheng, Principal
Newcomer High School, San Francisco

The majority of students in our sample were several years below grade level at the time of our interviews. Falling behind in classes, feeling tremendous pressure to achieve — many individual immigrant students continue to feel the effects of inadequate academic preparation beyond the first few years of transition.

- Teaching

A student population with increasing numbers of limited English proficient and immigrant children necessitates new teaching styles and attitudes. More than a third of our student sample reported incidents of what they felt were teacher prejudice against immigrants. Their examples clustered into the following categories: students being punished or embarrassed for use of their native language or being made fun of because of improper use of English, misunderstandings between teachers and students due to cultural or language differences, deroga-

tory or stereotyped comments made in front of the class about immigrant groups, or teachers avoiding students because of the language difficulty. Seldom do teacher training programs or in-service workshops address these issues.

When teacher training resources are available to address the needs of immigrant students, they are usually focused on the staff of special programs. However, because of how students may be dispersed throughout a district, the critical cluster in a school of a single language group with certain academic needs often isn't met that would require a special program, and so the majority of immigrant students are not enrolled in such programs. Little emphasis in most districts is placed on training the regular teachers in skills and attitudes necessary for educating immigrant children. Special programs are seen as separate from the regular task of the school, not always equal in status, and competing for scarce resources.

"There's a need for the whole school to take on responsibility for the education of the LEP kids. Prior to four years ago the bilingual program was just a fraction of the total program. Now we're at least half of the school, but still we're seen as a separate department with a separate task. No longer should it be the bilingual program that establishes the math program for our LEP students and keeps track of their math progress. These are the students who are in the school, they should be the responsibility of the math department, and the science and the history departments. We really need to re-orient the school site staff so it's not us in the bilingual department lobbying for the students with the 'regular' departments. Rather, from the Principal on down we need to see it as *our* student population."

Margaret Brindle, ESL Chair
Mission High School, San Francisco

The research base, while still evolving, has documented educational approaches and methodologies which are highly effective with foreign born and language minority children — cooperative learning, sheltered English, more visual and graphic approaches. The link between that research and the classroom is weak, however.

Most districts with significant numbers of immigrant children have some means of in-service teacher training but they tend to be occasional (maybe one or two a year on this subject) opportunities on a voluntary basis, with little adequate training, support or materials to implement the approaches covered. Some districts have become more aggressive in this area: San Diego, for example, requires all classroom teachers to receive ESL training and in-service training in teacher expectations and multi-cultural awareness.

Recently, sheltered English approaches have become more popular as a means of providing both English language development and content instruction to secondary students who would be lost in the regular English taught curriculum. For a specific subject, students are grouped by level of English proficiency and teachers instruct using more limited vocabulary and non-verbal communication. Sheltered English has become important in providing academic content to those who are not English fluent but for whom bilingual teachers are not available. However, as with other approaches which group limited English speaking children apart from others, there is debate among educators and concern among students about whether these are "watered down" classes representing a lower academic track. Also, because schools can generally offer

only one or two sheltered English classes in a subject, it is still difficult to accommodate the very different academic levels of the students.

Sheltered English is an approach that addresses the language barriers, but there are other issues which make teaching immigrant children different from the native U.S. born — issues which require a new sensitivity, awareness and teaching style.

"The students we are working with now are quite different from the students we had in the 1970's. Some have been displaced because of war, famine, revolution or natural disasters. The issues they come with are difficult. Our teaching methods, no matter how innovative, have had to go through tremendous change. We're dealing with cross-cultural issues as well as individual differences. I remember teaching a spelling lesson to mostly Cambodian youngsters, and I was using a hangman game. One youngster said to me, 'You know, that is how my parents died.' That was my coming of age as a teacher of newcomer students."

Judy Levy-Sender, Teacher
Newcomer High School
San Francisco

Teachers and program staff strongly voiced to us the need for new teaching approaches, training and support program models to address the complexity of educating an immigrant population.

"Our classrooms are America. The only impression many students have of our country is what happens in school. So as a teacher I have to teach more than my discipline. I have to reach out. When I'm teaching American literature I have to teach them where their rights come from. I have to bring in history and the Constitution. But I also have to change how I teach. I have to paraphrase material before they read it because they don't have the background, the context. I have to present it. They sit there with their dictionaries and look up every third word, so I have to be careful what I say so it is worth their effort. I teach literature, and they read it word by word with great effort, so I have to make sure what they read is important."

Jay Schaeffer, English Teacher
Belmont High School
Los Angeles

Teachers throughout the state complain of the lack of course materials in primary languages that can help a child catch up or keep up with the core academic curriculum while learning English.

"Textbooks are a basic need. The district adopts textbooks but forgets there is a limited English speaking population. For example, when you adopt a biology text, let's not forget we have students studying biology in Spanish and Chinese. When you adopt a formal text, be sure there is one on the list that is Chinese and Spanish as well and don't leave it up to the school site to go around and try to find its own usable texts. It takes a tremendous effort and time, and it is just luck whether or what we find."

Margaret Brindle, ESL Chair
Mission High School
San Francisco

The challenge of how to help immigrant children in the transitional period is significant. In a survey conducted by the Lennox School District in Los Angeles County in 1985, 141 school districts were asked "Did you alter or change your curriculum or instructional program in any way to accommodate immigrant students?" Close to half answered affirmatively indicating the following kinds of changes: translation of core text materials, development of tapes which present basic concepts in native languages for home loan or listening centers, tutors, cooperative learning formats, lunchtime and after-school ESL support, immersion classes, computer aided instruction, reduced class loads, sheltered English classes, and others.

Teachers in heavily impacted areas, such as major ports of entry, must find ways to incorporate new faces in their classrooms every day of the school year. They must maintain some kind of cohesive curriculum that reaches the students, even as new ones enter on Monday and others leave on Tuesday. The logistics present a major challenge.

"We have the challenge of meeting the ongoing influx on a daily basis throughout the year, of having to place these children during the school year when classes have been established, when staff have been assigned, when teachers have their seats lined up and every kid now knows where his seat is. Can you imagine having to take in two kids more, three kids on a daily basis? Some teachers cannot cope with this type of movement."

Ligaya Avenida, Coordinator
Bilingual Education
Public Testimony, San Francisco

For districts near the border with Mexico, or with large numbers of Mexican immigrant children, the period of time before and after holidays is marked by very high absenteeism as families travel to Mexico. Students may or may not return to the same school or even to California. Logistically, education becomes even more complex to deliver.

New Curriculum For a New World

"Thus the same ongoing migration which makes it so difficult to conceive of a common history for the people of California is, ironically, *the* unifying theme of the social history of this place called California"

Charles Wollenberg, Historian

Mainstreaming an immigrant child into the standard curriculum, seen as the goal of compensatory programs, is not sufficient. Our old curriculum is too narrow. Immigrant children seldom find their own experiences or histories reflected anywhere in the classrooms or the texts. This creates among them a sense of unreality and unimportance about their past, and also contributes to the difficulties U.S.-born students have in developing awareness, tolerance and skills for living in a diverse world.

"I was so excited when my history teacher talked about the Vietnam War. Now at last, I thought, now we will study about my country. We didn't really study it. Just for one day, though, my country was real again."

11th grade Vietnamese girl, immigrated at age 15

A curriculum that ignores much of the world results in a lack of worldliness for all students. California history as it is normally taught often leaves out the histories of long-time communities of ethnic groups which immigrated in past times: Mexicans, Chinese, Pilipinos, Japanese. Our state as well as our national history *is* of a society built by immigration waves. It incorporates growing pains, political struggles and cultural clashes, the study of which provides a context for students to understand the dynamics of their own lives. Attitudes in our society and in our classrooms about immigrants, the drama of trying to make a new life in a new land—these themes of California's past are the very ones central in the current lives of the students filling our schools. By bringing them into the classroom as legitimate subjects for study and discussion, students learn about human diversity, prejudice and oppression, social justice, tolerance, and the continuing struggle to create a workable democratic multi-cultural society.

Educationally we know that drawing upon a student's own life experience increases both understanding and motivation in the classroom. Some of the exciting approaches being tried with immigrant children has them writing their own experiences as a piece of history. This gives them a chance to process the experiences and practice expression, and teaches other students and staff some lessons of life as well.

Several schools we visited had compiled collections of immigrant students' writings about their homelands, journeys and immigration experiences. In San Diego, a book of such essays has been used as a tool for staff development. Many teachers spoke with us about the powerful effect on their students of hearing for the first time what their immigrant classmates had been through.

As our population is changing, so too is the role of California in international commerce.

Several studies and reports over the past five years have pointed to the increased need for foreign language skills, international awareness, knowledge of geography and international commerce in our curriculum

"The first challenge involves recognition of the fact that the Pacific Rim cities such as San Francisco are increasing in immigrants, and we need to focus on business in countries that are part of the Pacific Basin. What this means for the schools is that there needs to be more attention paid to the economic development of our city and country as it relates to the Pacific Rim. This translates into a redefined curriculum for the schools which focuses on preparing all students to become more culturally diverse, aware and prepared to participate in this new arena, and to encourage the bilingualism to support that participation"

Ramon Cortines, Superintendent
San Francisco Unified Schools
Public Testimony, San Francisco

At this point most teachers are inadequately prepared to incorporate international perspectives in their curriculum. According to the California Economic Development Corporation's policy agenda on California and the Pacific Rim, only 5% of prospective teachers take any course relating to international affairs or other cultures as part of their professional training. U.S. school children's knowledge of other nations, people and geography is sadly lacking. Only 15% of American high school students study a foreign language.

"We need to prepare this state for the cultural, economic and social changes that will profoundly influence our future. To do that we simply must find ways to give our students a truly international perspective, especially one that includes an understanding of the nations rimming the Pacific."

David Gardner, President
University of California
December 1984 speech to
California Press Association

Our multi-national, diverse student population is a potentially important resource for international awareness and foreign language development. At this point, however, their perspectives are mostly ignored and their language skills destroyed by the current curricular approaches. Students are punished or teased for speaking in their native tongues. Very few schools throughout the state offer programs to develop native language literacy—and many immigrant students lose or never fully develop literacy in their native tongue. The failure to respect and foster these language skills as a valuable resource for the immigrant student means a loss for the individual and the state.

"If children have the oral skills in a language, it is a crime to not help them develop full literacy. It is a skill, to be developed and prized—for them and for us all."

Dorcas Lopez, Bilingual Coordinator
Stockton Unified School District



The students we interviewed expressed a strong desire to maintain their native language and to be able to pass the language along to their children. The desire is to preserve a link to their past, to enhance the ability to communicate with elders and with those left in the homeland. In some communities, after school classes or Saturday schools run by community groups provide an opportunity for native language development. In one school district the school system purchased books and provided space for these classes.

The San Diego schools have merged their bilingual program with the foreign language division into a single Second Language Division of the schools. Under this rubric comes foreign language academies, English as a Second Language programs, foreign study and all programs associated with the development of second language skills. The Lennox Schools and ABC Unified provide native language literacy programs. But in most districts of this state, nothing is done to develop and enhance the native language capabilities and resources of immigrant students.

"I think we have to begin to look at the notion that in a cosmopolitan city like Los Angeles, it is no longer acceptable to learn only one language and speak only one language. I know I'm flying against all the trends, I've read the election results, but I need to say this. We need to say, like most of the industrialized world does, that really educated people have the ability to speak two or more languages. If we are going to meet the challenges as well as the delights of immigration, one way is to have a bi-literate, bi-cultural, bi-lingual population. This is one of the trade capitals of the world. It is an asset to speak more than one language, and I don't think the schools have done enough to develop that resource. In elementary school years we say 'Learn English, Learn English,' then suddenly in ninth grade we say 'Learn Spanish, Learn French, Learn Italian.' At the high school where I teach, on one side of campus are native Spanish speakers, speaking fluent beautiful Spanish but having trouble with their English. On the other side are English speaking students struggling to learn Spanish. Why wouldn't we think of putting them in the same room? Let them learn Spanish from Spanish speakers, or English from English speakers. Let them be a resource to each other."

Jackie Goldberg
Los Angeles School Board Member
Public Testimony, Los Angeles



Orientation: Essential in the First Year

Most immigrant students need an orientation to the United States way of schooling and preparation to understand the social mores of their U.S.-born peers. But most school districts provide no such orientation. Meanwhile, the children experience confusion and problems in making the transition to our schools.

"You don't know anything. You don't even know what to eat when you go to the lunchroom. The day I started school all the kids stared at me like I was from a different planet. I wanted to go home with my Dad, but he said I had to stay. I was very shy and scared. I didn't know where to sit or eat or where the bathroom was or how to eat the food. I felt that all around me activities were going on as if I were at a dance but no one danced with me and I was not a part of anything. I felt so out of place that I felt sick. Now I know more, but I still sit and watch and try to understand. I want to know, what is this place and how must I act?"

8th grade Vietnamese girl,
immigrated at age 9

The vast majority of the students we interviewed spoke of confusion, sadness, and the difficulty of the first year here in school. References to inability to understand what was being said, shock or dismay at the behavior of American children, or simply not knowing the normal procedures to get through the school day were common.

"In Korea there is a class which teaches Korean customs and traditions, like what you do and eat at a funeral. It is all throughout junior high and high school. Students are taken to a separate building where elders teach the class. It is very serious. I wish they had something like that here in the United States so I could learn the customs and how to be an American."

11th grade Korean girl, immigrated at age 12

"The girls in my class were so open, they even talked more than the boys did! I was shocked and didn't know how to act. They tease me sometimes and I do not understand how they can act that way. The boys and girls hold hands and sometimes even I see them kiss in the hallway."

10th grade Cambodian boy, immigrated at age 14

Some of the difficulties are simply related to the fact that the school structure is different here. How to open a locker, changing classes, eating in a lunch room, recess and free time to play, discussion approaches in classes, all are bewildering for the newcomer. Many feel overwhelmed by the sheer number of logistical, behavioral and attitudinal differences between their past school experiences and the U.S. school system.

"I started in 7th grade and had trouble looking for classes. In Mexico we stay in the same place all day. I went to the first class because that is where I was taken. It was over so soon and I didn't know to go to another class, so I went home. I got in trouble. They should have told me, and had someone walk me to my classes at first. I didn't know!"

9th grade Mexican boy, immigrated at age 12

Classroom discussions, analyzing material, expressing oneself in writing are all activities foreign to children from school systems most of which rely primarily on rote memorization, lecture and test-taking. And, most puzzling and problematic for immigrant students, the relationships between teacher and student are vastly different here than in most nations. Here students openly disagree with teachers, talk back freely and don't always obey directions or commands. Here the teachers don't physically discipline the students and don't usually apply the kind of pressure which immigrant children are often used to in their native countries. The relationship is puzzling and oft-times misunderstood.

"The greatest difference is the attitude of students and how the school treats the students. In Taiwan everybody knows you must study hard. In Taiwan it is very competitive and the teacher wants you to pass the examination. Here there is no pressure. If you don't want to study, it's okay, no one is going to hit you. In Taiwan they forced us to study for our own good. The goal is to get into college. Here only the parents care if you go to college. Only they push you. The school doesn't really care about us."

11th grade Chinese boy, immigrated at age 13

"It is very different here. Kids try to rule the teacher. In Korea you obey the teacher. They punish you there, too. Here we are freer. We get more time to play around and do things besides study. I like it here better, but the teachers don't get respect."

10th grade Korean boy, immigrated at age 11

Along with an immigrant child's confusion about U.S. behaviors can come a lack of awareness about requirements, placement, rights, procedures, promotion and counseling as well. Obviously, this can and does damage academic development.

Most immigrant students are placed in the regular school program with some part of the day devoted to special services addressing the language needs. As mentioned above, most school districts have no mechanisms for orientation or transitional support.

Some districts are trying, though. For example, the Alhambra schools publish a workbook/handbook for newcomers in many languages which describe the school structure and requirements, regulations and survival skills such as how to open a locker, and who to go to for what kinds of information. They also have a slide/tape presentation for immigrant students and their families. ABC Unified School District offers a day long program each semester for immigrant students and their parents and issues a handbook to each. See page 79 for more examples.

Usually, however, the ease and success of the first year experience of an immigrant child in our schools depends serendipitously on finding someone who speaks his or her language (often another immigrant child) and can explain things to them, or the kindness of someone who takes the time to try to remove the mystery from procedures and behaviors. Immigrant students are, by and large, left on their own — to find their way or not.

"The school was so big! There were students everywhere all the time — not just in classes. I didn't know how you were supposed to know where to go when. There was no one who could speak Mien and explain to me. My uncle had told me if I needed any help to go to the Dean. My teacher asked me something and I didn't understand her. So I just said

'Dean, Dean' because I needed help. That is how I got my American name. She was asking me 'What is your name?' and I kept saying 'Dean.' Now everybody calls me Dean. Now it is funny, but it is also sad. My name comes from not knowing what was going on."

12th grade Lao Mien boy, immigrated at age 14

In some districts, there are special newcomer programs which allow for centralizing resources and providing an immigrant child an intensive cultural orientation, English language development and skills development. There are different models for these: some are full-day programs for up to an entire school year; others are part-day programs in conjunction with enrollment part-time at a regular school. Debate about the efficacy of newcomer programs centers around the advantage of being able to provide a focused and intensive program for immigrants to help the transition process, and the disadvantages of creating an isolated and separated experience for them.

"I don't want a newcomer center here. It's almost segregation. The immigrants get no interaction with kids who are fluent in English or in our culture. It doesn't help them become part of the world here. It's also backwards. Teachers say to the district, 'Take these kids away and don't send them back to us until they know some English.' That's not the way it should be. Schools, all of them, should reflect the general population. And teachers, all of them, should be able to work with immigrants."

Dorcas Lopez, Bilingual Coordinator
Stockton Unified Schools

Yet, given the reality that most school campuses are ill prepared and sometimes unwilling to provide the orientation and intensive English language development needed by many newcomers, for many districts a newcomer school or program is very desirable.

Counseling and Special Needs

The pressure on immigrant students can be overwhelming. For some, their own high expectations and pressure from their families to do well in school often clash with a reality that presents many barriers to academic and social adjustment. Also these children come to their school experiences with a set of needs embedded in the immigration experience (see Chapter 2). To ensure that the stresses and special needs do not interfere with a child's education requires culturally sensitive and linguistically accessible support. Little is available—either within the school program or in the community. To some extent this is due to lack of recognition about the needs, or a view that the school is not responsible for addressing them. But there are also some critical barriers to providing services. As guidance and counseling budgets have been cut in many districts, the availability of any kind of program to address children's emotional and social needs has been curtailed. Additionally, there are few trained bilingual counselors with the primary language skills to provide such support, particularly for Asian students.

Given the void in school services, some immigrant children are seeking or receiving help elsewhere. Within some immigrant communities there are churches, mutual assistance associations or other groups which provide cultural maintenance programs to help children retain some link and develop some knowledge of their native culture while developing their new American identity. To the extent these activities validate a child's dual identity, involvement in these





activities can provide much needed support for children during the transition process and help them develop integrated self-concepts bridging the two cultures.

Informally within the schools, self-help groups (often formed as study groups), ethnic student clubs, or peer counseling "buddy programs" have been identified by students as particularly helpful in providing peer support and a context for processing some of the issues in the immigrant transition.

- War Trauma

Students who are particularly traumatized and scarred due to war, political oppression or poverty, and those who are here virtually alone with little support, sometimes need professional help. In spite of the fact that large numbers of immigrant children suffer this trauma, there is little recognition about the issue among school personnel and generally no programs or approaches for responding. Few if any districts include mental health assessments or questions about a child's war experiences as part of the initial intake process. When it comes up at all, it is because of a child's strange behavior or a chance occurrence. One elementary school teacher in the audience at the San Francisco public hearing came up to us and told the following story:

"The issue came up so unexpectedly. It really caught me off guard. The children were painting pictures. Inadvertently some red paint got splashed on the picture a child from El Salvador had just drawn of a person. The child burst into tears, tore up the picture and was inconsolable for hours. Later she told me that red was blood, and she didn't want blood on her picture. It later came out that her father had been murdered when their village was destroyed by soldiers. The poor child. I really didn't know what to do!"

Community mental health professionals working within immigrant communities spoke repeatedly about the need for services for children traumatized by war. A comprehensive approach would need to include teacher training (in recognizing war trauma, in classroom approaches for helping children when the issue arises, in referral options), good referral and coordination linkages with community mental health groups, and comprehensive intake processes. Cultural values against speaking about one's problems and feelings with strangers, and taboos about mental health treatment all present barriers for many immigrants to seeking professional help. The lack of culturally sensitive and trusted mental health services within the immigrant communities becomes crucial. New styles of counseling are needed in these cases. In one community, we found a mental health agency running workshops in a neighboring high school for students from war-torn countries.

- The Undocumented

Students in our sample who are undocumented were found to be at high risk for emotional stresses and problems interfering with school. It is definitely not appropriate for schools to try to ascertain which students are here illegally. Yet the problem is acute enough to merit some attention. A large number of immigrant children, particularly those from Mexico and Central America, are undocumented. To the degree that schools themselves feel like unsafe environments, these students are driven further and further from seeking help there and from their educational program.

"I don't have immigration papers and I feel afraid of being caught. I work at night, so it's hard to study. But the main thing is being afraid. All I want is for my family to stay together and not have problems with la Migra. My uncle says we may not be able to work anymore and may have to go somewhere else. My teacher asks for my mother to sign a paper, but I am afraid to have her name in the school file. I am afraid they will deport her."

11th grade Mexican boy, immigrated at age 11

"At school the first week I was stopped in the hall and asked to see my green slip. I thought he meant my green card (immigration papers) and my heart raced. I was so scared I couldn't answer and I was sent to the principal's office. It turns out he meant a slip from the teacher saying I had permission to be in the hall. I was afraid to tell the principal why I hadn't answered, so I lied."

11th grade Mexican girl, immigrated at age 14

In one school a job search unit in an English class required all children to apply for Social Security cards. The student who told us about it was undocumented. He left school that day and never went back. For those living in fear about being caught, assurances are necessary clarifying that schools play no role in the detection or detention of the undocumented. School staff should understand thoroughly that it is unacceptable to ask for documentation or to harass students and deny participation on the basis of being undocumented.

- Realistic College Counseling

Large numbers of students immigrating in high school are expected to take college prep classes and get 4.0 averages so they will get into UC Berkeley or UCLA or Harvard. The unrealistic pressures are seldom mediated by academic or personal counseling. Eight out of ten

of the students in our sample who say they plan to go on to a four-year college were not actually in the college track in high school. Their course loads indicate they were not fulfilling basic entrance requirements. Those who cited high levels of concern about their schooling or problems affecting their schoolwork often spoke of feeling overwhelmed, discouraged, and heavy pressure to excel. Reports from community agencies link these pressures to the drop out rate, suicide and drug use.

Whether because counselors are overworked and have little time for students, because counselors are prejudiced about the abilities and aspirations of immigrant children, or because immigrant children are unaware that counseling services are available to help with these issues — the result among our sample was a clear lack of guidance and support from the schools.



The Challenge

The challenge facing our school districts is tremendous. The task requires a commitment and resources that few districts have been able or willing to apply—and a fresh assessment of the schools' curricula, staffing, resource allocation and relationship to the community.

"It's a very complex task, and one that requires a great deal of thought and careful planning, and the resources to go along with it, all three of which are often in short supply. We have a different kind of student now. Our schools have been designed for one kind of student and in fact we're educating another kind. We've known it for some time. But being able to have the wherewithal to catch up to it is a tremendous task."

Olivia Martinez, Principal

Luther Burbank Middle School, San Francisco

That reassessment has begun, and there is core of dedicated people applying the best of their thinking to designing schools and programs that truly educate the immigrant child. These pioneers can and should be a resource used by educators throughout the state and the nation who are only now beginning to respond to the new student population. However, there are few mechanisms or support for the networking, sharing and teaching that is so essential during this time of change.

To the extent that sharing exists, it occurs through the professional associations, the individual efforts of committed professionals (such as the Multicultural Teacher Training Institute), or through informal contacts. The state plays little role in fostering these resources. There must be formal mechanisms for sharing the expertise and experience gained by those districts who are forging the path, and incentives to pull along the many districts that are just beginning.

The most successful models for educating immigrant children take place within strong, comprehensive district-wide efforts, often encompassing ties between the community and the schools. They include the following administrative elements:

Strong top level support and commitment for the education of immigrant children which sets a clear tone and overall philosophy for the district

The collection and analysis of district statistics and research about program effectiveness and about the needs of LEP and newcomer student populations

Allocation of district funds and resources, and aggressive support of community funds for aspects of the program not sufficiently supported through special state or federal funding

Staff assigned clear responsibility with good communication processes for implementation and monitoring of the district program

District dissemination of the growing research base about the education of foreign born and language minority children

Parent and immigrant community advocates consulted and involved in the design, monitoring and evaluation of programs (see Chapter 7).

Why is it so rare that this kind of comprehensive effort exists in our state? Lack of awareness about the needs of the student population, lack of leadership and will to embrace our newcomers and design an educational system that addresses their needs, and lack of understanding of the heavy implications that inadequate education for immigrants has for our society. The result, however, is a state which doesn't begin to face the difficult but necessary and important challenge of educating our populace.

Generally, our immigrant student population is left to overcome the tremendous stresses of immigration on their own. Caught between conflicting demands and expectations, trying to make sense of one's past and build a hopeful future in a new country, dealing with the harsh realities of resettlement can be paralyzing or debilitating to children who face these issues on their own. They are forging paths that their parents often can't understand, into territory where their needs are little recognized nor appreciated. The fact that some make it through our school system and excel is a testimony to their own strength, determination and luck. But as Chapter 8 will discuss, too many are clearly being left behind.

RESOURCES

Bilingual and ESL Approaches:

Bilingual programs exist in various forms and effectiveness throughout California. We have listed several resources which can provide evaluation studies, successful program models, or technical assistance.

The State Department of Education publishes and distributes handbooks and other materials on teaching LEP students. In addition, they have conducted a Case Studies Project implementing research about effective teaching of LEP students in five schools in California. Copies of publications, descriptions of programs, and referrals to program models and sites can be obtained from the Department:

Contact

David Dolson, Assistant Manager
Bilingual Education Unit
State Department of Education
721 Capitol Mall
Sacramento, CA 95814

The California Association of Bilingual Education is the state affiliate of the National Association for Bilingual Education. They provide materials, conferences and workshops about bilingual education.

Contact

CABE
926 J St., Suite 810
Sacramento, CA 95814
(916) 447-3986

The San Diego Schools have developed a district-wide ESL curriculum for grades K-12. This curriculum, titled ELEPS, is available from the district.

Contact

Tim Allen, Director
Second Language Division
San Diego City Schools
4100 Normal St.
San Diego, CA 92103-2682
(619) 293-8096

Transitions:

Newcomer High School in San Francisco is one of the original newcomer programs in the nation. Established in 1979, it provides for up to a full year a total program for foreign born high school age students, includ-

ing native language instruction, counseling, English language development, and cultural orientation. One particularly innovative aspect of the program is an exchange project with other high schools in the Bay Area.

Contact

Paul Cheng, Principal
Newcomer High School
3630 Divisadero St.
San Francisco, CA 94115
(415) 922-1190

In Hayward, secondary level immigrant students participate for half of each school day in a special off-site English Learning Center program. This balances the need to integrate students socially into the regular high school programs while still providing a safe and intensive environment for orientation, English language development, and native language support. Transportation between the school sites and the center is provided by the district.

Contact

Zaida McCall, Director
English Language Center
Hayward Unified School District
2800 Calaroga
Hayward, CA 94545
(415) 783-4857

Los Angeles Unified School District has recently developed an orientation program for newcomer students which provides basic introduction to the community as well as to the schools. This course can be offered in any school site and includes field trips, opportunities for discussion about issues facing immigrant students, emphasis on English language instruction through creative forms such as drama and music, and basic survival skills.

Contact

Lila Silvern
Emergency Immigrant Education
Assistance Program
Office of Bilingual/ESL Instruction
Los Angeles Unified School District
450 N. Grand Ave., Room G-286
Los Angeles, CA 90012
(213) 625-6937

The family and the home represent to the child a link to what is known and familiar. They look to their families and hopefully find support and help in understanding the world around them and protection and assistance in learning to negotiate their ways through the world. Immigrant children, however, face a culture and a way of life generally unfamiliar to their parents and have the task of being the first to forge a path into the new.

Most immigrant parents are not proficient in English and live in communities where little English is spoken. They rely on their children to translate for them when dealing with the English speaking world. With responsibility as translator about the ways of the new culture and interpreter between the native language and English, the immigrant child is often in a position with no one to translate or interpret for him.

We found a wide gap between immigrant parents and the schools. Immigrant children are called upon to explain to their parents a school system they have only recently themselves begun to figure out, and they seek to adapt behaviors and attitudes appropriate both to their native value system and past experiences and to their new school culture. They live in the uncomfortable chasm between parent expectations about the school, and school expectations about parents. Without effective mechanisms for communication, immigrant parents seldom receive the information they need to serve as effective supports and advocates for their children, and the schools seldom receive the kind of support and cooperation sought.

School personnel are often frustrated by what they view as a lack of support or caring on the parts of immigrant parents. They complain, "Hispanic families just don't value education," or "Immigrant parents never even come to conferences or Back to School nights even though we need a chance to talk about their children's progress." Immigrant parents spoke eloquently about their confusion and concern about their children's education. The vast majority of school district personnel and community agency staff and advocates identified to us a need for better communication between school and parents.

Educational research is emphatic about the importance of the role of the parent in the educational achievement of children. As part of the educational excellence movement here in California, the state Department of Education under Superintendent Honig's leadership has launched a "Parents are Teachers, too" campaign focusing on how parents can support their child's education. The various suggestions include, for example, "read with your children and discuss what they read"—yet immigrant parents are almost always illiterate in English and sometimes in their native languages as well. Parents are instructed to "supervise homework and make sure that assignments are completed"—yet immigrant parents understand little about the role of homework, the structure of our educational system, or many of the content areas their children are studying. There are special difficulties barring immigrant parent involvement in the schools, the first being, obviously, language. Immigrant parents are unable to read school bulletins, parent newsletters and other materials sent home by the school if they are issued only in English. In the few districts where care is taken to translate materials into the more common languages, there are still cultural barriers. The educational systems in the countries from which most immigrants have come are different from in the United States. Our educational system is



unique in its openness and sometimes reliance on the parents to serve as advocates for their children, providers of input into school policy and program design, guiders of the homework process, and volunteers in a host of school activities.

Immigrant parents are often reluctant to criticize or question the schools due to gratitude for free education, respect for teachers, uncertainty about what is really going on in the classroom, or fear of being viewed by authorities as a troublemaker. Yet they are troubled by many U.S. teaching approaches including the fact that in our school system time is allocated for play, that extracurricular activities are considered an important part of the school program, that

learning takes place and is presented through different people, sources and experiences, that homework is used to supplement regular classroom learning. They are particularly disturbed by what they view as the lack of discipline and lack of respect shown for teachers.

"My parents will not let me stay after school to play soccer. They say I have to study. I study and I study and I study. That is what they believe I need to do. If I don't have homework, still I study. They make me do it over and over again. They really want me to do well, but they don't understand about the schools here."

10th grade Cambodian boy, immigrated at age 9

"My son needs an education here. That is the way for him to have a good life. I fear for him, though. Here the teachers don't keep an eye on the children. He misses school and the teacher doesn't discipline him. He says the teacher doesn't care if he does his work. I try to teach him respect for his teacher, but he says that is not how it is here."

Honduran mother of 9th grade boy

Although half of our student sample report that their parents have been to school on at least one occasion, most state that it rarely occurs for reasons such as parents' lack of English ability and there being no one at school who speaks their native language, work schedules that make it difficult to come, and children's feelings of shame and fear that their parents will be laughed at because of dress or language.

"Our parents don't come because they don't know any English. I don't even tell them when they are supposed to come. They dress so different and I don't want our parents to come because the others will laugh at them and tease us. We are ashamed."

9th grade Filipino girl, immigrated at age 11

No other part of our research elicited such painful responses from students indicating how torn they feel between the old and the new. Feeling loving and protective of their parents, they try to shield them from the abuse and hostility of the new culture towards immigrants. Yet they also feel shame at being associated with the old culture and the lack of sophistication their parents display in the ways of the new culture.

The chasm between parents and the schools creates problems for immigrant students. They have more trouble with their homework because they are unable to turn to parents for help, because some parents (not understanding the role of homework or with little choice due to economic hardship) rely on children to take care of younger children and the home, to work after school to help the family, or to act as go-betweens for their family (see Chapter 3). As a result, immigrant students seldom have anyone monitoring their school progress, placement and achievement.

"The refugee parents are frustrated. On the one hand they want to push their children academically, to become someone in the society, to work hard and study well. On the other hand, they cannot effectively intervene in the educational process. They cannot attend school functions, PTA meetings, even school conferences because of language and not understanding the process. The relative solution would be two-sided. Parents have to be educated on how to access the system, how to be influential, who to go to. And on the other hand, the school itself needs to outreach to bring in the parents of the new students in the system, because unless the parents work cooperatively with the schools we will not

get the education for the children that they need. To address this we recently opened a new service, a language bank. We provide translation and interpretation in Vietnamese, Chinese, Laotian and Cambodian and help with school conferences with refugee parents. This is a start."

Vu-Duc Vuong, Executive Director
Center for Southeast Asian Refugee Resettlement
Public Testimony, San Francisco

There are other starts as well. We found some schools in the state providing orientation workshops for parents about the U.S. school system, and distributing translations of vital school materials. Title VII has provided federal funds for pilot Family Literacy Projects. Community agencies and immigrant community self-help groups sometimes provide interpreters and assistance to families in dealing with the schools. Generally, however, the burden still falls directly on the children to provide a bridge between home and school, educating both their parents and the schools in the process and, in the meantime, finding little tangible assistance from either.

RESOURCES

Building stronger relations between immigrant parents and the schools involves both a community thrust and school initiated efforts. Many districts are beginning to offer parent materials in the languages of the families. The following examples go beyond that important translation step to active involvement of parents.

The Hacienda/La Puente school district shows movies in a variety of languages as an entertainment draw to the school site in the evenings. The movies are followed by native language speakers on topics such as the educational system in the United States, and issues facing children in the community. These evenings are regularly offered to the Korean, Chinese and Spanish speaking parents.

Contact
Anthony Guerro
District Specialist
1600 Pontenova Drive
Hacienda Heights, CA 91745
(818) 330-3607

Operating in San Francisco, Marin and Santa Clara counties, the Center for Southeast Asian Refugee Resettlement provides translation, mediation and support for parents to participate in teacher/family conferences and other meetings with the schools. In addition, their Language Bank has translators available to both schools and parents.

Contact
Vu-Duc Vuong, Executive Director
CSEARR
875 O'Farrell Street
San Francisco, CA 94109
(415) 885-2743

The La Escuela de la Raza Consumer Language Program is a collaborative project of UCLA and Los Angeles Unified School District. The consumer education program provides workshops on weekday evenings and Saturdays for immigrant parents at Lincoln High School. The course is taught by UCLA student volunteers, and covers basic survival skills, an opportunity to practice situational English, awareness of consumer products and agencies, preparation for the GED, processes for registering children in school and an orientation to the school system. The UCLA contact with parents and presence on the school campus also enhances the recruitment of students to the university.

Contact
La Escuela de la Raza
Consumer Language Program
Community Programs Office
University of California at Los Angeles
MG 102
Los Angeles, CA 90024
(213) 825-7843

Stereotypes abound. “Asian immigrants outscore all the rest!” “Our immigrant students do better than anyone else.” “Immigrants just don’t work hard enough, they don’t seem to be interested in learning English.” “Our real drop out rate isn’t really that bad, it’s just that we have so many immigrants moving in and out of our system.” The statements are contradictory; they are all encompassing. They stem from the wonderfully inspiring success stories of the few high achieving immigrant students, from the first-hand experience of a person in a particular school and situation, or from deeply embedded stereotypes about various ethnic and racial groups.

These stereotypes flourish in the vacuum created by the lack of data kept by schools. There is, in fact, very little research about the achievement of immigrant students. As mentioned in Chapter 1, ethnicity data is used to extrapolate about immigrant children, yet the majority of the Asian and Spanish surname population in California are not immigrants. A single “Asian” category, for example, includes native born Asian Americans as well as distinctly different language and cultural immigrant groups varying tremendously in the kinds of educational and war-disrupted backgrounds brought to this country. To date, most research and educational statistics lump these together, masking the realities for immigrants and making appropriate policy and program design very difficult.

In fact, most immigrant students are struggling in our schools, as this chapter will show. Some do markedly better than others—but even years after entering the schools here and years after being formally designated English language proficient, the achievement patterns of the vast majority of immigrant students do not match the norm for U.S.-born children.

A complex of variables affects how well an individual immigrant student does in school, including those factors discussed in Chapter 2 (prior education, socioeconomic status of the family, degree of war trauma and life disruption due to war, age at which immigrated, etc.), the luck of enrolling in a school with a strong program or a particularly sensitive and trained teacher, and the amount of hard work and resolve of the student.

The literature shows evidence that some waves of immigrants have done better than others. For example, the first wave of Indochinese immigrants (a more educated and less war-disrupted population who came in the early 1970s) have generally excelled in school here, unlike their fellow native students who came later from usually less educated, poorer and war-stricken backgrounds. A huge range exists within Asian and Southeast Asian groups between very high achievers and very low achievers, with the bulk of students having difficulty. There also appears to be a pattern of somewhat higher achievement by immigrant Mexican children compared to U.S.-born Mexican-Americans. However, the measures used for “achievement” vary from study to study, making comparisons difficult—some use grade point averages, others use SAT or College Board scores, others use CTBS or other standardized measures.

For this study we have reviewed the literature, and compiled and analyzed data on three areas associated with school success: academic achievement, school attendance and drop-out rates, and higher education participation.

Academic Achievement

An immigrant student is reclassified from “Limited English Proficient” (LEP) to “Fluent English Proficient” (FEP) when that student scores above a certain percentage on a standardized test of English language proficiency. That measure supposedly assures that a child is

sufficiently proficient to fully and competitively participate in an English taught curriculum. Reclassification rates are often used, therefore, as a measure of how well programs are doing and how well an individual immigrant child is doing.

An average of 50,000 LEP students are reclassified as FEP each year, according to the Department of Education. Most of the reclassifications take place approximately three years after a student has entered the system. Very few remain designated as LEP beyond five years. Yet research on language acquisition shows that it takes from three to seven years for LEP student to gain English language proficiency sufficient for an academic setting (Hakuta). Learning English is more or less difficult for an immigrant child depending on whether English was studied in the native country prior to immigration, whether there was previous experience with bilingualism, and the degree of native language literacy achieved prior to trying to learn English.

We found in our sample that language groups gained proficiency in English at different rates. Hispanic immigrants showed a dramatic decrease in self-reported difficulties with English after four years in the United States. Combined Asians and Southeast Asians showed a decrease after three years. However, for all groups, over half still reported problems with understanding English in the classroom after five or more years in the country. In spite of these problems, there is tremendous pressure on the individual student and on the schools to speed up the reclassification rate. Labeling a specific length of time as an appropriate cap on reclassification is very detrimental to students who need more time and support to gain the strong English language skills required of the regular academic curriculum.

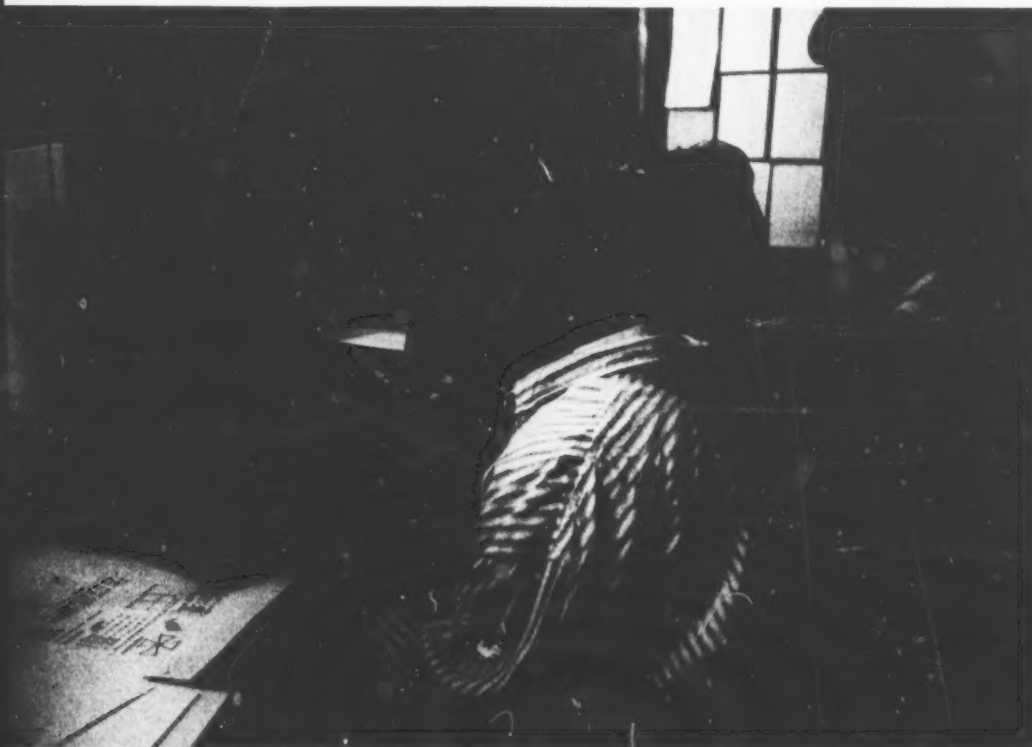
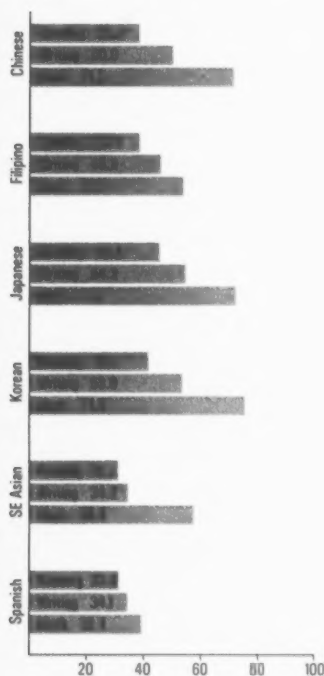


TABLE 12: Twelfth Grade CAP Results, 1985-86, Percentile Rank by Language Groups (FEP)



SOURCE: State Department of Education, 1986

• California Assessment Program (CAP) Scores

The impact of insufficient English language development and support becomes apparent when we examine state CAP achievement test scores. The California Assessment Program is a state-funded testing program for public K-12 schools, designed to provide policymakers and the public with information on student achievement useful for evaluating the schools' instructional programs. Every student in the state in grades 3, 6, 8 and 12 is included in the testing program, so it is the most comprehensive data base available on student achievement.

Using student and teacher responses indicating a "language other than English spoken in the home," as well as data (where available) on nativity outside the United States, we analyzed the 1986 8th and 12th grade CAP test results. Average percent correct scores for each test were analyzed by students' primary language groups and English language fluency. Students whose primary language was other than English, but who were at the time of the test considered *fluent* English proficient were of special interest to us. These scores give an indication of how well immigrant students do after they have passed the initial transition years and are considered to be able to fully participate in an English-taught program. In effect, for these students language is no longer considered to be a barrier. Within the Fluent English Proficient group are students who were always English proficient, but are from families where English is not the primary language of the home. This factor could result in overstating achievement for the immigrant population.

Grade 12 Results

The grade 12 CAP test is a test of basic skills in reading, written expression and mathematics. The students taking this test were shortly to graduate from high school. With few exceptions (12th grade "Other Asian" math scores), most immigrant language groups scored below the norm in all subject areas. Southeast Asian and Hispanic immigrant students appeared most at risk on the basis of these test scores.

Immigrant students as a group (even *after* reclassification as fluent in English) are a population at risk judging from their reading and written expression scores on the CAP test. All language groups perform better in math and subjects which are less language based than in reading and writing. The relative rankings of language groups remain basically the same across all tests. But few of the groups score well on reading and writing compared to the norm. In general, the longer students have been in the United States school system, the higher their test scores. But even those in the United States for five or more years do not reach the norm (50th percentile rank) in English literacy measures. (Percent correct scores by group are expressed as percentile ranks. The 34th percentile means that 66% of California students scored above that level; 50% percentile rank is therefore the average for all students.)

Twelfth grade reading scores for all FEP populations are below average—at around the 34th percentile. Analysis of state FEP student CAP scores for reading and writing by length of time in the U.S. indicates that it takes at least five years for reading scores to begin to improve although they remain well below the norm regardless of length of time.

Writing scores for 12th graders show more variation among language groups than reading. Those groups from countries with more rigorous and uninterrupted educational systems, and groups with generally higher socioeconomic levels—"Other Asian"—score close to the norm on written expression (see Table 12).

When we further examine the Asian subpopulations we again find differences. With the exception of Southeast Asians, Asian groups' average percent correct scores are above average in math. The pattern of Southeast Asian students' difficulty compared to other immigrant groups (noted above) becomes again apparent.

Eighth Grade Results

The 8th grade CAP test measures academic skills as well as basic skills in reading, writing, history and math (see Table 13). Immigrant students do much better on the 8th grade CAP test than on the 12th grade test. Students included in the Fluent English Speaking group in 8th grade probably immigrated early in their elementary years. They would therefore have immigrated with less severe academic deficiencies than children who immigrated at an older age, and may have benefitted from programs for the LEP student in the elementary years.

However, low scores for Spanish speaking students in this cohort reveal they are already at risk academically. The 8th grade test does not include a separate Southeast Asian student category, so these students cannot be distinguished from other Asian language groups. But patterns of achievement on the 12th grade test, and from the literature, strongly suggest that Southeast Asian students are having difficulty in school. The CAP test scores reveal that when results for all Asian groups are combined, the higher achievement of some obscures the needs of certain other Asian language subgroups, such as the Southeast Asians. And the relatively lower reading and writing scores of all immigrant Asians shatters the myth that all Asian students excel and need little in the way of language assistance or support.

- School Grades

We were unable to collect consistent, reliable statewide data on student grade point averages. However, self-reported grade point averages (GPAs) in our student sample, local studies and the comments of teachers we interviewed indicate that Asian students as a group generally receive very high grades. The discrepancy between apparently high GPAs and this group's relatively low achievement on CAP scores may be due to a number of factors. Perhaps the high achievement of a few students establishes a stereotype that masks the difficulties and failures experienced by many others of the same ethnic group. Perhaps failure to distinguish between immigrant and U.S.-born students of the same ethnic group result in a stereotype that is untrue for the newcomer. CAP scores indicate high achievement among immigrant groups in math and (to some degree) science. Perhaps immigrant students enroll disproportionately in math and science classes which rely less on English language fluency, resulting in higher grade point averages in spite of deficiencies in English language skills. Our research found no clear patterns among Hispanics regarding GPAs.

- Study Habits

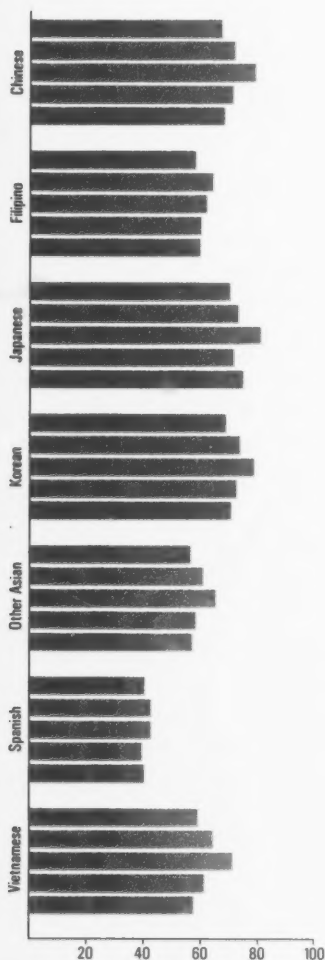
National studies and our own sample show that in the absence of strong support programs the sheer hours of effort immigrant students put into studying pay off in achievement. Among our sample we found interesting difference in whether, where and how they seek help when language becomes a problem in their schoolwork (see Table 14).

Some students form study groups, more common among Asian students, which help with basic academic work as well as social support. In some schools, students have formed ethnic study clubs or peer tutoring programs for immigrants. Many immigrant children do not seek



**TABLE 13: Eighth Grade CAP Results
Percentile Rank by Language Groups**

Note: includes Fluent English



SOURCE: California State Department of Education, 1986

help from anyone. The amount of homework and studying in after-school hours also shows marked contrast (see Table 15).

The hard work and effort pay off—but slowly. The majority of students in our sample were below grade level. Academic deficiencies, overcoming a language barrier, and the erosion of support programs and services before a student is ready to partake fully in an English taught program result in an achievement gap that all but a few fail to close.

Drop Outs

Dropping out of school is a measure of school failure. In spite of an increasingly comprehensive data base on attendance and drop-outs in the state, data is not kept with reference to country of origin, language group or English language fluency—all of which might give an indication of not only how immigrant students are doing, but why many drop out. Community agency staff and advocates emphasized in both public hearings and our project interviews that dropping out among immigrant students is a huge problem.

In the absence of a statewide data base on the issue, we examined attrition rates for the state's schools with the highest concentrations of LEP students. In California, urban high schools with over 1700 students are known to have the highest drop-out rates; these are the very kinds of schools with the highest concentrations of LEP students. Generally the larger these schools are, the higher the attrition rates. We found that the highest average attrition rate was for the schools with large concentrations of Southeast Asians (48%); next came the Spanish language sample schools, averaging a 46% attrition rate.

In our student sample, one out of four immigrant students had considered dropping out of school. The undocumented students were 4 times more likely to consider dropping out than were refugees. Analyzing the data by language groups, we found that Mexican, Central American, Filipino and Southeast Asian students were more likely to consider dropping out. The most-echoed reasons given were directly related to the children's immigration experiences: lack of family support and worries about separation from family or those family members left in the homeland; uncertainty about the stay in the United States; tremendous conflicting pressures to succeed academically as well as to help with family burdens; discouragement about fulfilling graduation requirements; hostility and prejudice felt in the school environment.

"I dropped out of school because the other students were so rude and mean. The work was hard, too. Nothing was right. I was scared of the girls who act so tough and embarrassed because everyone knew more than me. When I used to try to speak everyone made fun of

**TABLE 14: Who Helps Immigrant Students with Their Schoolwork
Student Sample by Nationality**

"Who do you go to help with your schoolwork when you need it?"

	Immig. Friend	Native Friend	Parents	Sibling/ Relative	Tutor	Special Prog. Staff	Teacher	No One
All Combined	26%	4%	9%	15%	4%	3%	22%	17%
Mexican	14	3	8	19	3	3	26	24
Central Amer.	13	2	18	10	8	2	25	22
SE Asian	31	7	5	11	2	1	33	10
Filipino	25	—	16	31	6	3	3	16
Other Asian (Chinese, Japanese, Korean)	47	3	7	10	6	4	10	13

me so I never wanted to talk again. I couldn't understand what the teacher was saying. On one test at school I didn't write a single word because I didn't understand. That was the last day I went to school. I felt happier home with my sister."

Mexican girl, immigrated in 10th grade

Dropped out of school at age 16

The tentativeness of the stay in the community or in the country may discourage an immigrant child from counting on graduating from school.

"Generally, immigrants enter school later which effects the drop-out rate and the attendance rate, either permanently or temporarily. You may have a child who's born in the U.S., whose father may be undocumented, but the mother is here legally. The INS apprehends the father, the family moves. They're pulled out of school for six months and re-enter again somewhere else. Already there has been a question of delayed education, which continues to get interrupted. Then later on, they may permanently drop out of school because they are never able to catch up."

Gilberto Cardenas

Public testimony, Los Angeles

In interview after interview students spoke of the uncertainty of their plans and how it affects their school life.

"I don't know if I can graduate. I think my family will be returning to Mexico in May, but we don't know. If we are still here I want to graduate, but I don't think we will be. Anything can happen."

12th grade Mexican girl, immigrated at age 11

For those from war-disrupted backgrounds, burdened with concern about their families and the weight of traumatic memories, it is hard to concentrate on school:

"My family problems are heavy to bear. My mother cries all night. I hold my little sister because she is scared and I try not to think about our father. He was shot before we left. I don't do my homework most nights because it is so sad at home and I try so hard to help. Now I am repeating the 10th grade. I sometimes think I should drop out of school. I cannot keep up."

10th grade Salvadoran girl, immigrated at age 12

The conditions at home often make even harder the already difficult task of doing homework, and trying to bridge the language and skills gaps for an immigrant child. In public testimony, several school and community workers spoke of the effects of overcrowded housing and poverty on immigrant students' schoolwork and emotional stability in the classroom. Economic pressures to work and provide child care for the family put the immigrant child at a higher than usual risk of dropping out of school.

"Once I was here the hardest problem was the financial instability. We didn't have anyone after my mother went back to El Salvador. Only my brother and me and we couldn't support ourselves. My brother left school and went to work and night school. His salary is not enough for both of us. It's hard to handle and that makes me think about dropping

TABLE 15: Time Spent Doing Homework Each Night, Sample by Nationality

"How many hours of homework do you do each night?"

	Less than 30 minutes	Up to 2 hours	More than 2 hours
All Combined	17%	53%	30%
Mexican	33	56	11
Central American	14	59	27
SE Asian	7	53	40
Filipino	16	62	22
Other Asian (Chinese, Japanese, Korean)	6	39	55



out of school, too. It is hard to just go on like this. It is not a good idea to go back to our country, but if I don't have an education it will always be hard here. I worry so much about money I think I have to leave school"

Cesar Menjivar, 11th grade Salvadoran student
Public testimony, San Francisco

Other factors our sample associated with dropping out included negative interactions with teachers, prejudice experienced towards the child's ethnic or language group, inappropriate tracking or program placement decisions, a dangerous physical environment which includes frequent victimization, and overcrowded and/or insufficiently staffed schools.

- The Drop-Out Research Literature

National studies have shown drop-out rates appear highest for the newly arrived Hispanic immigrant student who has entered in the late middle school or early high school years. Those who immigrated at an early age do better than more recently arrived immigrants, and oftentimes better than native-born Hispanics at staying in school (Hirano-Nakanishi and Fernandez, 1985).

Students with non-English language backgrounds drop out at roughly twice the rate of those with English language backgrounds. One national estimate comparing Census data to school enrollment placed the drop-out rate for the foreign born at close to 70% (McCarthy). Children from homes where English is not spoken, and who themselves do not speak English when they enter school drop out at four times the rate of those from English language backgrounds. Among those from non-English backgrounds, Hispanic students drop out at twice the rate of those from other backgrounds (Steinberg, Blinde and Chan).

The literature on dropping out among language minority children shows that more than socioeconomic status and ethnicity are at work. Those who are not fluent in English when they begin school are at a distinct academic disadvantage in programs where the language of instruction is primarily English. Because so much subsequent learning in our schools is reading based, the academic disadvantage increases over time. By third grade, 80% of all FEP Hispanic students are academically below grade level in reading, writing and math. Language minority students are more likely to be placed in lower school tracks, or assigned to Special Education. Early academic failure has repeatedly been shown to be predictive of later dropping out of school.

There has been encouraging attention given to the drop-out problem, especially for Hispanic students, in the past five years. However, failure to develop data about what percentage of these are immigrant students and what percentage are native born resulted in lumping the two together and designing policies and programs as if a shared ethnicity and language were the only factors. We found no data or programs examining the drop-out problem among other immigrant groups we believe to be at risk—Filipino and Southeast Asian. While we know that being economically disadvantaged is correlated with higher drop-out rates, and that being non-English speaking is as well, there is no data at this point that allows us to view cultural differences as a factor. For example, we don't know if drop-out rates are as high among recently arrived poor Indochinese students as for recently arrived poor Mexicans, or if the reasons contributing to dropping out are similar for these groups.

Our research indicates that the foreign born have a higher drop-out rate, and that the variables affecting their connection to school may be somewhat different than those affecting U.S.-born children. Further research providing a closer examination of this issue will be important in designing effective drop-out interventions.

In a discussion of drop outs, it is critical to look at the factors that hold children *in* school. The immigrant child, in general, is highly motivated to learn English and to attend school. For many, school is the only social environment in which they are exposed to their peers. Their suspension between two cultures and national experiences seems to fuel a desire to learn about the new culture. Most come with a deep respect for teachers and learning, and an appreciation of a free public education system. Most immigrants, at least initially, believe strongly in education as the means for success in this country.

"It is important to my family that I do well. We want our life in this new country to be a good one. I work very hard at school. My father makes me study even when I have no homework. He tells me this is how I can have a better life. America is a wonderful place to have free schools. Sometimes I cry because I am so tired of studying, but I know it is the way."

10th grade Vietnamese boy,
immigrated at age 14

School Attendance Rates

School attendance rates for immigrant students can not be directly analyzed because statewide and local data systems do not track students by country of origin or English language fluency. However, the overall unexcused absence rates for those schools with large concentrations of immigrant students show contrasts. Overall, they are close to the state average, indicating that generally immigrant students are probably absent no more or less than other students. However, middle schools with high concentrations of Southeast Asian students have higher unexcused absence rates, followed by middle schools with large concentrations of Spanish speaking LEP students. Larger schools at all levels have higher unexcused absence rates, and we know that Hispanic students are disproportionately enrolled in larger schools in urban areas. In addition, teachers report high *excused* and unexcused absence rates among Mexican students around the Christmas holiday due to trips back to Mexico and failure to return after school has reopened. Another factor muddying the picture on attendance is the difficulty of ascertaining

whether an immigrant student is in school elsewhere in the state, given the high mobility of the immigrant community.

The larger urban schools have higher absentee rates, and these are the schools in which immigrants are disproportionately enrolled. This data suggests that immigrant students might be more at risk, but it is far from conclusive.

School Suspensions

The school districts in our sample did not collect information about suspensions and school discipline based on immigrant status or country of origin. San Diego is an exception, where a school investigation and report on suspensions was conducted, as was an extensive study by UC San Diego sociologists Rumbaut and Ima. Generally, the rate of suspensions in San Diego for immigrant groups is either less than or equal to their overall representation in the school population. But the trend data is disturbing. The number of student suspensions has declined 16% overall in the past year, but for Asian students the number has increased by 22% including a sharp increase of 53% at the junior high level. A further look indicates suspensions for Indochinese students have increased more rapidly than for any other group. The vast majority of these suspensions are for boys, primarily for physical injury in fights with non-Indochinese students. The school report documented linguistic, racial and social barriers facing the Indochinese students and growing physical retaliation in response to physical and verbal abuse from other students.

In our student interviews, students were asked about incidents of having gotten into trouble at school which they felt were related in any way to being an immigrant. Their responses centered on misunderstandings due to language problems, prejudice of teachers, or getting into fights with other students over name-calling or verbal or physical harassment.

"I got sent to the office because my friend needed something explained to her in Spanish, so I helped her. But the teacher didn't know what I was saying and she always gets mad when we speak Spanish because she just believes we must be saying bad things. I told her, but she didn't believe me, so I got sent to the office. I was mad."

10th grade Mexican girl, immigrated at age 13

"I got suspended for fighting with a kid who called me names and said he would call La Migra (the INS). When I get called names I get upset and fight back and get in trouble all the time. I feel afraid he will get us caught so I try to make him afraid of doing anything bad to me."

11th grade Salvadoran boy, immigrated at age 14

"I had detention for three days because I was in the hall during class and didn't understand it was against the rule. That was the beginning. Then they thought I was a troublemaker, so everytime something went wrong I would get a lot of trouble. Then I got suspended for a week after I fought a black kid who called my mother names and spit on me."

12th grade Mexican boy, immigrated at age 10

Higher Education

In our study we compared the stated college plans of 11th and 12th grade high school students with their academic tracks, and found most who planned to go to college were not actually in college-prep programs or receiving proper academic counseling. Close to 80% said they planned to go to college. However, only 10% of the Mexican-born immigrants who planned to go on to college were in a college preparatory track. Twice as many Central Americans, and four times as many Asians, Southeast Asians and Filipino students were in the college track. Either the remaining students expecting to go to college have unrealistic plans or they are not adequately counseled and placed in courses that would give them the academic preparation and requirements needed for higher education.

Misinformation was evident in our student interviews. What counts as credits towards college entrance? Would ESL be counted? Would proficiency in one's native language be adequate for a foreign language requirement? Can someone who is illegally here be admitted to college? How many credits do you need? What criteria is used for college admission? Questions that should be answered by a college counselor were left unanswered or satisfied with misinformation from other students.

"I want to be a doctor or an engineer. Nobody from my family has gone to college. They will be very proud, but it is very expensive, I know. My teacher told me there is financial aid, but I didn't tell her we are illegals. I wonder, will they let me go to college? Can I get a scholarship?"

11th grade Honduran boy, immigrated at age 15

"I just found out that to go to the state university you need four years of regular English. If you've taken ESL classes they make you go to city college first. I knew that I shouldn't have stayed in ESL classes."

11th grade Cambodian boy, immigrated at age 14

Generally, the more overcrowded urban schools — those in which immigrant and other minority students are most likely to be enrolled — are not known for the strength of their academic college preparation, college counseling or outreach. Yet here is a population of students, many of whom are highly motivated and desiring of higher education.

• Participation in the Higher Education System

Despite inadequate academic preparation, by utilizing the community college system on a part-time basis, a large number of immigrants appear to find their way into some form of higher education. Are these the students who graduated from our K-12 system? How well do these students do in higher education programs? What barriers exist in admissions? There are many unanswered questions, and a great need for research and documentation in order to ascertain whether and how well our K-12 system prepares immigrant students to go on to higher education.

There has been a great deal of interest lately in patterns of attendance in public higher education in California. These discussions and their supporting data cannot be applied to

TABLE 16: Community College Enrollment
Counties Ranked by Immigrants and Refugees as a Percentage of
Total Enrollment 1985

County	% Immigrant	% Refugee	% Immigrant Refugee	% K-12 LEP Enrollment
Imperial	26.2	0.0	26.2	32.6
San Francisco	22.3	1.6	23.8	29.7
Los Angeles	12.3	0.9	13.2	19.2
Orange	8.7	2.8	11.5	13.0
San Benito	10.1	0.1	10.2	23.4
San Mateo	8.2	0.2	8.4	11.4
Santa Clara	7.8	0.4	8.2	11.0
San Diego	6.1	1.4	7.4	11.2
Ventura	6.2	0.3	6.5	9.5
Santa Barbara	5.9	0.3	6.2	9.5
Fresno/Madera	5.1	1.1	6.2	10.7/8.6
Marin	5.6	0.3	5.9	2.6
Stanislaus/Tuolumne	4.9	0.4	5.3	8.0
Riverside	4.5	0.2	4.7	8.2
El Dorado/Sacramento	3.7	0.9	4.6	1.6/6.1
San Bernardino	4.3	0.3	4.6	5.7
San Joaquin	4.2	0.0	4.2	17.1
Santa Cruz	3.5	0.3	3.8	15.6
Alameda	3.4	0.4	3.8	9.7
Sonoma	3.1	0.6	3.8	3.8
Solano	3.6	0.1	3.7	5.5
Napa	3.1	0.4	3.5	4.7
Kings	2.4	0.8	3.2	11.1
Kern/Inyo	3.0	0.0	3.0	6.6/1.1
Tulare	3.0	0.0	3.0	8.9
San Luis Obispo	2.2	0.0	2.2	3.5
Lake/Mendocino	1.5	0.1	1.6	1.8/3.8
Del Norte/Humboldt	1.4	0.1	1.5	1.7/0.7
Siskiyou	1.2	0.0	1.2	0.8
Butte/Colusa Cluster	0.8	0.1	0.9	2.1/7.5
Shasta/Tehama/Trinity	0.6	0.2	0.8	1.9
Lassen/Modoc	0.3	0.0	0.3	0.4/1.7
Nevada/Placer	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.9
Contra Costa	0.0	0.0	0.0	4.0
Merced	0.0	0.0	0.0	14.2
Monterey	0.0	0.0	0.0	20.8

Source: Chancellor's Office, California Community Colleges
 California State Department of Education.



immigrant students simply because they are focused on ethnicity and do not differentiate between immigrant status and native born, or on the basis of language background and fluency.

Data on public higher education enrollment of immigrants in California demonstrates that some groups are gaining access and making use of the higher education system—at least the community college system—while other immigrant groups, Hispanics in particular, are greatly underrepresented. Three-quarters of the foreign-born students who are enrolled in public higher education in California are enrolled in the community colleges. More than half of these attend part time. Combined immigrant Asian groups are participating in the California State University (CSU) and community college system in a higher proportion than their numbers in the K-12 system. While 15% of the state's Hispanic seniors (U.S.-born and foreign-born combined) are eligible for admission to the CSU system, only 2.9% of them enroll. Mexicans are underrepresented in all three public higher education systems, and there is a decreasing trend in their enrollment. The University of California (UC) system data doesn't separate foreign-born immigrants and refugees from foreign students here on student visas. They report 5% of the students in the UC system as "foreign students," with 40% of these of Asian ethnic background, less than 5% of Hispanic background.

Community college immigrant and refugee enrollment includes adults who did not attend the K-12 public schools, as well as immigrants who graduated from K-12 schools and are now entering the higher education system. Therefore, comparison of representation in the K-12 level with community college enrollment does not directly show the success of the K-12 system at preparing students to enter higher education. However, it does give some indication of utilization of the college system by immigrant groups. There are interesting geographic differences (see Table 16).

Imperial, San Francisco, San Benito, Los Angeles and Orange counties ranked in the top 10 counties for both K-12 LEP students and for immigrants as a percentage of community college enrollment. In two counties, immigrants attending community college full time make up more than a fourth of the total full-time enrollment—Imperial with 31.5% and San Francisco with 29.5%. This compares closely to the LEP concentrations in the K-12 public schools in those counties. However, five counties show a higher foreign student community college enrollment than their LEP K-12 student population would indicate (San Mateo, Santa Clara, San Diego, Ventura and Santa Barbara), and four counties (Monterey, San Joaquin, Santa Cruz and Merced) have high LEP concentrations in the K-12 system but reported few immigrant/refugee students in the community college system.

California State University has the most extensive and useful data system of the higher education systems in the state—documenting the country of origin for all foreign students, foreign students by campus and program. Most immigrants and refugees within the CSU system come from Vietnam, representing one fourth of the foreign enrollment systemwide. This contrasts with approximately 5% of the K-12 system immigrant population. As with community college enrollments, this discrepancy is likely at least partially due to the large number of Vietnamese who immigrated as adults and entered the CSU system without ever being in the K-12 system. In recent years, the number of foreign-born students in CSU has increased overall—with the largest increase among Vietnamese. By contrast, the number of Mexican-born students decreased. On seven of the twenty CSU campuses, at least one in ten students is

classified as a resident alien — 42% of them enrolled in two programs: Business and Management, and Engineering.

Thus, while some Asian populations (notably the Vietnamese) are clearly utilizing the CSU and community college system, Hispanics and some Southeast Asian populations are vastly underrepresented. In addition, when we look at indices of matriculation and K-12 preparation for higher education, we find problems.

Too Much To Lose

This section demonstrates that many immigrant students face difficulties in making it through our school system and gaining the education they need. Even after being mainstreamed into the regular English taught program and designated as fluent in English, achievement in most cases remains below the norm. Drop-out rates are disproportionately high, particularly for Hispanic, Filipino and Southeast Asian immigrants. Suspension rates are climbing for Indochinese newcomers.

Obviously, all is not well, pointing to the need for strong and more directed programs to assure that newcomer children in spite of the cultural, linguistic and educational hurdles they face are given their due education. This raises questions of expectations — the children's and the system's — and makes clear the challenge. What *can* be done to graduate a child who enters the schools in the 10th grade with just a few years of prior schooling to compound the language and culture gaps? How realistic is it to utilize standard norms as the measure of achievement for immigrant children in English reading and writing? What can be done to free immigrant children from the lockstep age/grade relationships and give them the time they need to overcome language barriers and bridge academic gaps?

Immigrant children bring a tremendous motivation to learn, excitement and appreciation for a free public education system, a deep respect for teachers and the schools, and a strong desire to make their new life here in California workable. They are most often met by schools with haphazard efforts to address their English language needs or their academic skill development needs, social environments which are ambivalent if not openly hostile to the immigrant, provided no orientation or support in making the transition to this new culture, and cut off too soon from supports which might make it possible for them to fully partake in the school program. Immigrant children are, for the most part, left to sink or swim on their own in school. Some swim, and their success and achievements are an inspiration and testament to their hard work, luck, strengths and survival skills. But the majority appear to be sinking — and with them sinks their future and California's as a state dependent on a labor force increasingly comprised of immigrants, and dependent on the ability of its people to live together in a diverse society.

We cannot truthfully claim that our educational system has tried to educate newcomers. We have only just begun. The past decade of headway in developing bilingual programs and approaches for the language minority child, and the past seven years of efforts in major ports of entry districts to address the needs of immigrant children have started a process that now needs support, leadership and commitment at the state and local levels, new ways of sharing

what has been learned and of encouraging development of those models, and a new honest look at the needs of immigrant children. We can continue on in a haphazard fashion, with a few notable and successful programs and many insufficient or damaging ones. We can choose to lose ourselves in ideological debates and turn our backs totally on the new demographic changes in our state. But we have too much to lose.

RESOURCES

Community Services Coordination and Drop Out Prevention

Many districts have drop out prevention programs which undoubtedly serve immigrant students as well as the general student population. This effort is specifically mentioned because of the focus on immigrant children.

Focus on Youth is a privately funded program working on site in schools in Los Angeles Unified School District with large immigrant student populations. The thrust of the project is to coordinate the resources of community agencies and focus them on students at great risk of dropping out of school. Two program coordinators for each school cluster serve as consultants to teachers, school counselors and administrators to identify community based resources and assess the needs of targeted students. The program is a successful model of community agency, private corporation and school district collaboration.

Contact

Jose C. Colon
Focus on Youth
1320 W. Third Street, Room 402
Los Angeles, CA 90017
(213) 625-6944

Academic support and tutoring are high on the list of immigrant students' needs.

While some form informal study groups or solicit help from friends and family, there is a great need for formal programs both in school and in the community.

The Korean Youth Center in the Koreatown area of Los Angeles is an example of community-provided programs that support immigrant students. The Center offers tutoring and homework assistance as well as a cultural maintenance program.

Contact

Jane Kim, Executive Director
Korean Youth Center
309 S. Oxford Avenue
Los Angeles, CA 90020
(213) 383-5218

A multi-lingual Homework Assistance Hotline, staffed by bilingual high school tutors, has been developed by the San Francisco Unified School District. Students with questions about homework can call for assistance.

Contact

Ligaya Avenida, Coordinator
Bilingual Education
San Francisco Unified School District
150 Van Ness Avenue
San Francisco, CA

"Do you mean that after you interview me, you may use my words in a report that the politicians will read? And after they read it, they might decide to make the schools better? That's amazing!"

Cambodian immigrant student



This section of recommendations addresses the need for instructional strategies, school structures and supports for immigrant children which will mitigate the barriers they face to full participation in the school program. The focus of this report is immigrant children, so the majority of our recommendations focus on their needs specific to the immigration experience and the bridging of cultures and languages. However, issues of equity, quality and integration affect a far broader group of children than just the foreign born. Immigrant children share with other children of ethnic/racial minorities and with children in poverty certain experiences that place them at risk in our schools. Some recommendations herein echo what has been repeatedly voiced by advocates for those communities as well.

Legally, schools must ensure that students have access to the school program regardless of national origin or English language fluency. Implementation of the letter of those mandates is a bottom line that is yet to be reached by many schools in the state. Compliance must be seen as a first step, but only the first step. The spirit of the law and our responsibility to educate the foreign born demand far more.

Immigrant children share with all children the need for a high-quality core curriculum teaching a set of basic academic skills, providing support in developing positive self-esteem, and imparting knowledge and concepts which will enable students to function effectively in our society. To the extent that the schools do not yet provide such a core program, even the best add-on and supplemental programs for immigrant children cannot provide the education they need. A quality educational program for immigrant children demands more than a mainstreaming into the school program as it now exists. That mainstream program must be re-examined and redefined so it becomes inclusive of the needs of all children and of our society. Creating a school system designed to well serve all children necessitates an analysis of the ways in which our educational structure, pedagogy and approach may support or detract from the goal of all children getting a quality core program, and an analysis of ways in which these structures contribute or undermine the goal of an integrated, educated and equitable society. While it is beyond the scope of this report to focus on basic school reform, it must be clear that until such re-definition occurs we will have failed to address the educational needs of the future citizens of California.

An educational system responsive to the needs of immigrant students should include the following elements:

A high-quality core school program designed to address the needs of a diverse population;

Approaches which assure access and equal participation for all children in that common program;

Instruction delivered in a linguistically and culturally comprehensible manner;

Comprehensive assessment approaches linked to appropriate placement options in supplemental and instructional programs;

Instruction and counseling support delivered by appropriately trained staff;

Intensive and high-quality English language instruction;

A safe and positive integrated school experience with a social climate respectful of diversity;

Active counseling and support focused on the transitional phase of immigration and the special concerns and problems facing immigrant children designed to foster the development of a positive self-concept incorporating the bi-national, bi-cultural and bilingual experiences of the foreign-born child;

Appropriate language and counseling support for as long as a child needs it until he/she is fully able to participate in the core school program without such support;

Close communication and collaboration between home and school.

A school program that does not provide these elements penalizes immigrant children by reducing their capacity to function in our society. The price we pay as a society is a future in which an increasing number of people (indeed the majority) will be ill-prepared for participation in the labor market or our democratic system, and without the skills for living in a diverse population or the ability to share in our commonality.

The recommendations in this report are structured to address each of the elements listed above. While the major responsibility and task for educating immigrant children and creating an educational system appropriate to our future society falls to the schools, the challenge should not and cannot be addressed solely there. Our recommendations are made to several sectors of the society—policymakers, educators, community advocates, the business sector—each with a role to play in creating the educational system we all need.

We need state level leadership, planning, and data collection for ensuring equitable, quality educational experiences for immigrant children.

California has become increasingly culturally and linguistically diverse in the past ten years. The steady and steep increase in a foreign-born school-age population is projected to continue. These changes require an analysis and refocusing of school programs, staffing, funding and policies. However, the state has neither the structure nor the information necessary to accurately assess the impact of immigrant children on the schools, identify needs, evaluate services or provide an authoritative basis for planning.

Without clear leadership articulating the commitment to educate immigrant children and providing direction for that commitment, the needs of the foreign-born student have become lost in a highly politicized battle over school reform, school financing and bilingual education. As this report was going into production, the Governor vetoed the state's Bilingual Education Program.

As the school-age population grows and is increasingly comprised of student groups who have traditionally been "at risk" in school, the needs are outstripping the resources. The California public school system is operating with an increasingly severe fiscal crisis. California already lags behind other industrial states, ranking 45th in the nation in its spending per student in relation to personal income. Add to this the increasing proportion of students with special needs, the state spending constraints imposed by the Gann Initiative Limit, and the federal Gramm-Rudman Deficit Reduction Act. State funding formulas for programs for limited English proficient students are inadequate to assure that resources flow proportionately to where the needs are.

For the past decade, some school districts in California have been grappling with the challenge of designing programs for immigrant students and developed national models and a wealth of expertise about what works and what doesn't. There is a growing group of people with experience and knowledge about how to educate the foreign born. Other districts have been slow or unwilling to recognize the need to refocus curricula, staffing or programs to appropriately educate the newcomer child. Yet, California has a vastly inadequate system for disseminating models and research or sharing expertise. This results in tremendously uneven program services, re-invention of the wheel, and impediments to the development of a comprehensive and quality approach.

We make the following recommendations related to establishing minimum bottom line requirements, setting high expectations and incentives, providing leadership and support for the provision of quality educational programs, and establishing a baseline data and tracking system to assist in planning.

To the State Legislature and the Governor:

Provide demonstration project grants for the implementation and evaluation of program approaches which promise to offer new options for the education of immigrant children, and provide monetary incentives to school districts to implement academically excellent models which have demonstrated unusually successful outcomes for immigrant students.

Provide funding for dissemination of programs which have demonstrated successful new models for serving immigrant children.

Re-evaluate EIA state funding formulas to ensure that such formulas adequately address the special needs of limited English proficient and immigrant children.

Provide for adequate school construction in those areas most highly impacted by recent immigrant waves which have resulted in disproportionately overcrowded schools.

Provide direction and funding to the State Department of Education for the collection and broad dissemination of research based models for the education of immigrant children, and for establishing a data collection system to track the educational experiences and achievement of foreign-born children.

To the State Superintendent of Instruction:

Institute within all data collection systems (CBEDS, CAP) a consistent means of identifying students by nativity and English language fluency to ensure that data on demographics, student achievement and student needs includes analysis of the needs of immigrant children for comparison with other student populations. This data should be regularly compiled and analyzed in status reports on the education of immigrant children in California schools.

Establish a "Performance Report" band of schools with over a 30% enrollment of LEP students for annual comparison of student achievement in "report cards" on school effectiveness.

Allocate staff to a unit of the State Department of Education to collect and publish evaluation data on various program approaches and services for immigrant children, and to serve an active networking and dissemination role to ensure that local school districts benefit from the research

and expertise of others. This unit should be combined with or closely allied with a Second Language Division and the current Bilingual Education unit.

Disseminate information to local school boards and administrators clarifying their continuing legal obligation to enforce the provisions of the *Lau* Supreme Court Decision regardless of the veto of the State Bilingual Education Program.

Ensure representation from the immigrant community on commissions and committees charged with reviewing and recommending textbooks and materials for state adoption. These commissions should be sensitive to the portrayal of immigrant groups as well as the needs for comparable and aligned materials available in a variety of native languages.

Host a high-level conference or roundtable on the needs of immigrant children in the schools, and invite representatives from the major immigrant communities to participate in presenting their concerns and perspectives.

To Local School Boards and Superintendents:

Institute data collection and monitoring systems which identify students by nativity, length of time in the United States and English language proficiency in order to ensure adequate planning and evaluation information for the district.

Establish Immigrant Community Advisory Boards to provide input on their concerns and to monitor the progress of the district in educating immigrant children.

To Community Advocacy Organizations:

Request that the school board provide regular status reports to the community on the education of immigrant children.

Every immigrant child should be assured access to the school system and be provided with comprehensive assessment.

Access to an education includes the legal right to enroll in school, comprehensive identification of needs that might prevent involvement in the regular program without special support services, and assessment of appropriate program placement.

In spite of a legal right for all immigrant children to enroll in school, a lack of awareness about this right, and fear of being apprehended by the INS serve as barriers to enrollment for the undocumented. Ensuring access to the schools for immigrant children includes building awareness among school personnel about the rights of children to enroll without demonstration of legal immigrant status, taking steps to eradicate instances in which (deliberately or inadvertently) children are asked to show proof of legal status as a condition of enrollment, assuring that schools are not utilized by the INS in any way, and disseminating information to the immigrant community about the right to enroll.

Once enrolled, foreign-born children need comprehensive assessment that goes beyond evaluation of English language proficiency to review academic skills in their native languages, educational background, health status and other factors which affect placement of a child in the most appropriate educational program. While a few districts in California have established thorough models of how this can be done, most provide minimal or inadequate assessment services. Lack of adequately trained bilingual staff, assessment materials and techniques, and commitment all result in some children never being identified, and a large percent being in-

appropriately assessed and placed. Systematic ongoing assessment provided by culturally sensitive and bilingual staff is essential, and needs to be followed up with appropriate program placements and services.

To the State Department of Education:

Collect and disseminate an inventory of assessment instruments for evaluation of literacy levels and basic skills in the full array of native languages spoken by immigrant children enrolling in the schools.

To Local School Boards and Superintendents:

Publish and disseminate information (in the languages of the local immigrant communities) about the legal rights to an education, school enrollment procedures and required documentation.

Through written directives or in-service training, ensure that all school personnel who are involved in registering students for school are aware of what information is required for enrollment, and the legal protection and importance of not requesting information about legal immigrant status.

Adopt formal policies that prevent intrusions on school grounds by immigration officials seeking contact with immigrant children, and which prevent schools from being utilized by INS officials in any ways which might cause undocumented immigrant children and their families to fear that coming to school might entail apprehension and deportation.

Develop a comprehensive intake and assessment program for the district which includes the following services provided by bilingual staff who are sufficiently trained in assessment approaches and are culturally sensitive to issues facing immigrant children and families: assessment in English language oral and academic proficiency, reading and writing literacy in both English and the native language of the child, basic skills assessment, evaluation of prior educational background, health screening, Special Education screening, and identification of background issues which may be barriers to full participation in the program.

Take steps to remedy resource disparities between schools in the district, being particularly mindful of the overcrowding, higher teacher vacancy rates, less well-trained teachers and sparser curriculum offerings at many schools with higher immigrant enrollment.

Whenever students are separated from the regular classroom program because of language needs or other special services related to being foreign born, the pull-out or parallel program must be aligned with the regular curriculum and of equal quality in instruction, pace and content. Such separation should last only as long as there are instructionally valid reasons for such separation.

To Community Advocacy Organizations:

Distribute information to immigrant families about their legal rights to enroll children in schools regardless of immigration status, and about required documentation for enrollment.

Provide translation and support to immigrant families in enrolling children in school to ensure that adequate information can be provided to the schools for a comprehensive assessment, and to help families understand the assessment process and be fully involved in placement decisions.

Every immigrant child should be guaranteed a comprehensible quality educational program taught by an appropriately trained teacher.

Teaching and learning are highly dependent upon the ability of a teacher to communicate and of the student to comprehend what is being taught. All children need to be taught in the approach, language and manner which make the subject matter most comprehensible. For the immigrant child, there are both language and cultural barriers to understanding the curriculum. During the transitional period, the newcomer needs linguistically and culturally appropriate instruction taught by a teacher specifically trained for that task. Native language instruction and support are crucial during the years a child is learning English to avoid growing academic gaps. Yet, there exists a critical shortage of bilingual teachers to provide that instruction and support, and the shortage is expected to get only worse over the next decade as the immigrant population increases and fewer people enter and graduate from bilingual teacher credential programs. In the year of our research, only two out of five identified limited English proficient children were in bilingual classrooms and only half of these were staffed by bilingual credentialed teachers. Without sufficient native language support, or taught by people who have not been adequately trained as teachers, immigrant children fall further and further behind their English speaking and U.S.-born peers in basic skills and concept development.

Because most immigrant children spend the bulk of their school day in the "regular classroom" and receive special services on a pull-out basis, the insufficient training of regular classroom teachers in approaches for working with the limited English speaking child and the foreign-born becomes critical.

The recommendations which follow address the need to develop a sufficient number of appropriately trained teachers to provide instruction in students' native languages, to train a teaching force in teaching approaches and sensitivities for shaping a regular classroom program appropriate to foreign-born as well as U.S.-born children, and to ensure that immigrant children receive a basic academic core in whatever language and teaching style make that material most accessible to them.

To the State Legislature:

Provide a state program for the recruitment and training of bilingual teachers including provisions for increased recruitment of candidates to training programs, loan forgiveness programs, incentives in salary bonuses for bilingual teachers in the districts with the largest unmet need, and the expansion of training programs.

To the State Department of Education:

Continue to develop and disseminate a research base about the most effective teaching methods, grouping practices, and pedagogy for educating immigrant and limited English proficient children. Reinstitute the Case Studies Project, initiate new case studies approaches, and provide staff training and technical assistance support through the county offices of education to translate research into workable approaches at the school site and classroom level.

To the Commission on Teacher Credentialing:

All classroom teachers trained in the schools of education in California should be required to take a course in methods for teaching the foreign-born and the limited English proficient child which includes second language acquisition theory and approaches, alternative teaching strategies, and background on the issues facing immigrant children in schools. Approval of teacher training institutions should be dependent upon such a requirement.

To Teacher Training Institutions:

Expand recruitment efforts and available slots for candidates for the Bilingual Teaching Credential. The program for this credential should include coursework on the issues facing immigrant children.

Require as a condition for credentialing of all classroom teachers, coursework on the issues facing immigrant children, second language acquisition theory and approaches, and teaching strategies for working with children of mixed language fluencies.

Offer summer institutes for classroom teachers in subjects related to the education of immigrant children.

To County Offices of Education and TECC Centers:

Develop libraries of resource materials that can be utilized by local schools where bilingual credentialed teachers are not available in the languages needed. These materials should include a wide variety of videotapes, audiotapes, translations of texts, and other resources that can be utilized by an immigrant student to learn core academic material in his or her native language. These resource materials should be under the direction of staff trained in integrating new technologies into instruction who can provide technical assistance to local schools.

Provide training workshops and problem-solving forums for teachers working in classrooms with immigrant children. These might include second language acquisition theory and techniques, information on war trauma, background on the immigration experience and the needs of immigrant children, teaching techniques appropriate to diverse classrooms, etc.

To Local School Districts and School Sites:

Whenever possible, immigrant students should be provided native language instruction by a credentialed bilingual teacher until they are able to fully participate in an English taught program. Where this is not possible, schools should institute an extensive recruitment and training program for community people with the language capabilities needed to work under the direction of a credentialed bilingual teacher. These training programs for bilingual aides should include career ladders, incentives and support to assist aides in getting the training needed to become a credentialed teacher.

Provide a well-designed and continuing program of in-service training for instructional personnel in bilingual programs. Teachers with emergency credentials or temporary waivers must be supported by a particularly strong in-service program.

New technologies should be utilized to supplement instruction where native language staff are in short supply. Videotapes, audiotapes and computers are all useful as tools to provide native language support.

Require in-service workshops for all classroom teachers in the district in second language acquisition and theory, the needs and issues facing immigrant children in the schools, and raising teacher expectations for the foreign-born student.

Ongoing assessment of English language proficiency is necessary in order to ensure that an immigrant student continues to receive native language support as long as needed.

Establish strong evaluation and research components for all bilingual programs and other instructional programs for immigrant children.

To Educational Publishers:

Textbooks and supplementary educational materials are needed in a variety of languages other than English to address the changing language needs of the students in California schools.

To Community Advocacy Organizations:

Consider establishing Saturday schools, after-school programs and tutoring services to provide immigrant students with native language support and translation of educational materials.

Initiate links with the schools so members of the immigrant community can work in the classroom to provide language support.

Develop a job training program for adults in the immigrant community to prepare them to work as bilingual aides in the schools.

The immigrant child needs intensive and high-quality English language instruction until sufficiently fluent to participate fully in the English taught academic program.

Our school system is an English taught curriculum. Success in school, and integration into our society are dependent upon fluency in the English language. Yet the language barriers facing immigrant students are tremendous, and the quality and duration of English language instruction provided them is insufficient for full and competitive participation in the English speaking environment.

To the State Legislature:

English language fluency is so critical to success in school that English language development services should continue to be provided until a child achieves *full* academic English fluency. Therefore, no caps should be placed on enrollment in ESL, language development or bilingual programs and reclassification schedules should not be imposed as a condition of funding or evaluation measure.

Increase funding for adult education programs in English as a Second Language.

To the State Department of Education:

Research and evaluation data on different approaches to English language development should be collected and disseminated to ensure that all local districts have full benefit of the research in designing their own program options.

Data on the supply of trained ESL teachers and Language Development Specialists should be collected, monitored and disseminated to teacher training institutions for short- and long-range planning.

To Local School Districts:

Develop and adopt a district-wide ESL curriculum K-12 to ensure continuity as children move from school to school, and to establish a quality and consistent approach to English language development.

Consider smaller teacher/student ratios in ESL classes to assure intensive and focused English language instruction.

Provide summer English language intensive institutes for the immigrant child (off track programs for year round schools).

Peer resources tutoring and friendship programs are encouraged to involve English fluent children with immigrant children and to provide language role models and assistance.

In districts which are highly impacted by immigrant students, *all* teachers in the district should receive training in ESL techniques.

An immigrant child's participation in English language development programs should be ceased only when the child is fully fluent in English. This requires ongoing assessment and follow-up monitoring after reclassification.

Immigrant children need a safe and positive school environment which is supportive of diversity and free from prejudice and harassment.

Our schools are not safe or supportive environments for immigrant children. They face hostile, unwelcoming and sometimes violent reactions from their peers, resulting in isolation and fear that affect their adaptation to U.S. culture, their development of English fluency, and their learning. While this is a major issue to students, it is little recognized or responded to by programs. Schools must protect students from violence and harassment, and make intergroup relations a top priority to help U.S. students and the newcomers overcome prejudice and develop the tolerance and skills for living in a pluralistic society.

To the State Superintendent of Instruction:

Institute a state-wide campaign to provide in-service training for teachers on intergroup relations. Direct more resources within the State Department of Education for the provision of materials, curricula, and technical assistance to districts for addressing intergroup relations, and specifically the integration of immigrants.

To the State Attorney General's Office:

Collect information about juvenile involvement with the law related to intergroup conflicts, including data on nativity, length of time in the country and whether racial/anti-immigrant motives or sentiments were expressed in the incident.

To Local School Districts:

Compile information on school suspensions and disciplinary actions related to intergroup conflict and including data on nativity, length of time in the country, and whether anti-immigrant or racial slurs were expressed. Such data should be utilized as an evaluation and planning base for programs.

A district level staff person should be designated responsible for programs and monitoring of intergroup conflict resolution.

Strong disciplinary consequences must be explicit and enforced for harassment and acts against students which involve racial, ethnic and anti-immigrant motives or slurs.

Teachers and principals should establish firm policies of respect for diversity, and model the behaviors they expect students to show towards newcomers, and vice versa.

Local districts are encouraged to establish community advisory groups on Human Relations (including members of the immigrant communities) to serve as advocates, monitor intergroup relations in the schools, advise the schools, and help mediate in conflicts involving students.

Teaching understanding and respect for diversity and for the immigration experience should be a basic element in the school curriculum. Special efforts should be made to incorporate local histories and resources of immigrant communities into the curriculum, and to develop strategies for utilizing immigrant students as teachers about the immigration experience.

Classroom and library materials must reflect the cultural backgrounds and histories of immigrant students in the school.

Institute peer-taught programs to utilize the language skills of immigrant children to enrich the language capabilities of English-only students.

The integration of immigrant newcomers and native-born children should be viewed as a high priority, both as a grouping practice and in terms of teaching strategies to make the diversity a positive factor in the classroom.

The family language of the immigrant child should be treated with respect by teachers and students—as a part of the child's identity and as a resource.

Second language acquisition should be encouraged for all students through policies, requirements and program options. Whenever possible, Asian and Pacific Island languages should be offered in addition to Spanish and other European languages.

Foreign language credits should be provided to students with facility in their native language.

To the Media:

Public awareness and the development of tolerance and understanding about immigrants can be enhanced through TV and movie portrayals of the drama of immigration, the obstacles facing immigrant children, and the strengths they bring to overcoming barriers in school.

To Community Advocacy Organizations:

In sponsoring youth activities, make linkages with youth groups from other communities, promote cultural diversity, and sponsor programs which both support a strong ethnic/racial identity and forge positive connections with other groups.

Provide mediation and translation services to the schools when intergroup conflicts involve children from your community.

Immigrant students and their families need support in overcoming stresses and issues confronted in immigration and in making the transition from one culture to another.

Immigrant students have special needs inherent in the immigration experience: the stresses of adjusting to a new culture, coping with resettlement, family pressures related to bridging two cultures, and (for many) living with the memories of war and trauma. Culturally sensitive and linguistically accessible support is needed to ensure that these stresses don't interfere with education. Little peer support, community support or bilingual counseling is available to the immigrant child. Because of the language and culture chasm between immigrant families and the schools, parents find it difficult to help their children make the transition.

To the State Superintendent of Instruction:

The campaign to involve Parents as Teachers and to enlist support for public education should be expanded to specifically address immigrant parents. Materials should be available and disseminated in the major languages of California's immigrant communities, and the recommendations assessed for their appropriateness to the immigrant family.

The State Department of Education should develop and disseminate materials for immigrant parents about the U.S. school system, expectations, procedures and requirements. These should be available in the major languages of the immigrant communities in California.

To Local School Districts:

Recognize the crucial role of counselors and psychologists to the successful adjustment of immigrant students in school, and seek to provide bilingual counseling services. Cutbacks in guidance personnel should be carefully considered in terms of the impact on this at-risk population.

Establish peer discussion and support groups for students from war-torn situations, and for groups of immigrant students so they have a place to discuss issues of transition and immigration. Encourage and support the formation of support clubs among immigrant students.

Recognize that immigrant students and families may need help making linkages with community agencies and services. Schools should develop a network of culturally sensitive social service agencies with trained bilingual staff for referrals and maintain close follow-up contact.

Orientation materials for immigrant families and students about the school system, expectations, requirements, procedures and roles should be distributed at enrollment in the languages of the family.

Provide parent education or English classes for immigrant parents, or coordinate the delivery of these with community organizations or the community college system.

All materials sent home from school to parents should be made available in the languages of the students' families.

Districts should develop a home/school library program in which parents can borrow reading materials to use with their children.

Consider providing special classes on the school site for parents, both to address their educational and orientation needs and to reduce the barriers between home and school. Schools should also consider allowing immigrant community groups to utilize the school facility during the evenings.

Students who immigrate in the high school years should be given the option of taking graduation exams in their native language, and an English language test graded on the basis of length of time in the United States.

Classroom teachers should create opportunities whenever possible for immigrant children to write about and speak about their immigration experiences — both to help the immigrant child process these experiences, and as a teaching tool for other children. Immigrant parents should also be encouraged to visit the classroom as a resource.

To Community Advocacy Organizations:

To strengthen the advocacy role of parents, consider publishing checklists for parents to assess the education their child is receiving, conducting classes for parents about the school system, providing mediation and translation support for school/parent conferences, and handling case advocacy for students who are having troubles at school.

California Tomorrow is a non-profit organization with offices in San Francisco and Los Angeles. The organization was founded to focus on issues that face California as we move into the next century—particularly those public policy concerns related to the state's future as a multi-national society with no ethnic/racial majority group. Economically, educationally and socially, the challenge presented by our changing demographics is to develop new approaches within our public institutions that make diversity workable and enriching, rather than divisive.

California Tomorrow launched the Immigrant Students and the Schools Project in 1986 as the first comprehensive state-wide inquiry into the needs and experiences of immigrant children in the public schools and the impact of recent waves of immigration on public education.

The major goals of this report, the result of a year of intensive field data collection, are to document the needs and concerns of immigrant children in the schools, identify barriers to equal educational opportunity where they exist, document the problems and resource needs of the schools with regard to serving immigrant children, and provide recommendations for the communities, districts and state which can begin to create a more appropriate school system.

The project draws upon several sources of data. We conducted in-depth interviews with 360 recently arrived immigrant students (ages 11 through 18), and with close to 200 community advocates, agency staff, teachers, researchers and other experts about the needs of immigrant children. We analyzed available state data on student achievement and immigrant demography, and conducted a broad literature review (see Bibliography, Appendix 3). In 29 school districts throughout California we interviewed administrators and school personnel, visited programs and collected all available statistics and materials about services for immigrant children. In collaboration with the National Coalition of Advocates for Students, California Tomorrow hosted two full days of public hearings during which 55 witnesses presented testi-

mony on the needs and experiences of immigrant students. Finally, the project called upon the expertise of a group of Project Advisers to review the findings and drafts of this report, and to help us understand and analyze the mountains of data collected throughout the year.

In-Depth Student Interviews

Structured in-depth interviews, lasting from 45 minutes to an hour or more, focused on collecting data on the backgrounds of immigrant students, their experiences in the first few years in California schools, and their perceptions and comments about the immigration experience. The 360 completed interviews were conducted in 33 communities throughout California, and represent the major immigrant groups in the state: Mexican, Central American, Filipino, Southeast Asian, Korean, Japanese, and Chinese. Of our sample is 45% is Mexican, 10% Central American, 29% Southeast Asian, 10% Filipino and 15% combined other Asian immigrant groups. While California boasts immigrants from more than 50 nations, the project (due to funding and focus limitations) only delved into the experiences of these major groups.

Because of the nature of the interview (see Appendix 2), we interviewed students ages 11 through 18. The information collected included data about their earlier years in California public schools. Clearly, some of the issues identified by the respondents were influenced by their being adolescents.

The interviews were conducted by a group of 11 trained interviewers fluent in the native language of the student subject. Some were conducted in the native languages; others in English; still others in a combination of languages. Students were identified for us through the schools and immigrant community agencies. Respondents were assured confidentiality, and given the option of not answering any questions they considered intrusive or risky. Our experience, however, was that most students were gratified by

the opportunity to talk about their experiences and that many of the conversations continued far beyond the formal structured interviews.

Thirty-three percent of the sample had been in the United States more than one year and less than three years, 15% had been here less than a year, and the remaining 52% more than three years. The majority were over 9 years old when they left their homelands to immigrate to the United States. Half were already teenagers when they arrived.

Out of 83 structured items on the interview guide, 74 were coded and entered into our data base for multi-variate analysis. The remaining open-ended questions and qualitative data collected from student in-depth responses to interview items resulted in a mass of quotes and rich oral material that was transcribed and utilized as descriptive material to flesh out our understanding of the quantitative data.

Interviews with Community Advocates, Agency Staff, Educators and Researchers

Interviews with 187 community youth-serving agency staff, immigrant community advocates, educators and researchers focused on identifying problems facing immigrant children and related to education, health and mental health service delivery for that population. These took place throughout California. At the conclusion of each interview we asked, "Is there someone else you think we should talk with who has an important viewpoint or information about the needs and concerns of immigrant children?" Whenever possible, we followed up with those suggestions. This snowball approach brought us into contact with valuable sources of information.

Public Hearings

California Tomorrow is a member organization of the National Coalition of Advocates for Students (NCAS). The two organizations collaborated in hosting public hearings on Immigrant Students and the Schools in November 1986. One was held in Los Angeles and the other in San Francisco. These hearings invited educators, researchers,

immigrant students and parents, community advocates and service agency staff to provide testimony on their views of the needs and problems facing immigrant children in the schools, the issues facing school districts in responding to immigrant children, and to provide a vision of what changes need to be made in the schools to better educate this population. The testimony was transcribed and became a record for our statewide research and for the national research project conducted by NCAS. A nationally focused agenda on the subject of immigrant students is available from NCAS through their national office (100 Boylston Street, Boston, MA 02116). The perspectives and issues raised in the hearings have been fully incorporated into this report, although in only a few cases have witnesses been directly quoted. A full list of witnesses appears at the end of this Appendix.

School District Data

In order to understand school district programs and policies directed towards the needs of immigrant children, 29 districts were selected for an in-depth inquiry on the basis of the number and concentration of immigrant population enrollment. Some additional districts we wished to include declined to participate; others allowed partial research to be conducted. In each of the participating districts, staff described programs and policies and discussed the issues facing their district in designing and implementing programs for immigrant children. Available statistics on enrollment, achievement and program effectiveness were collected. Policy statements and manuals were reviewed. Our data collection in those communities also included immigrant community members, school site personnel and students.

Participating districts included: ABC Unified, Alhambra, Arcadia, Coachella, Compton, Fresno, Garvey, Hayward, Hacienda de la Puente, East Side Union High School District, Los Angeles Unified,

Oakland, Pomona, Richmond, San Diego, San Francisco, San Jose, San Marino, Santa Ana, Stockton, Torrance and Vallejo. Although official district data was not collected in the following districts, interviews with school staff and students as well as members of immigrant communities were conducted in these additional communities: Alum Rock, Berkeley, El Monte, Fremont, Garden Grove, Jefferson, Long Beach, Pajaro, Santa Cruz, Sacramento and Riverside.

Project Advisors

In the early days of the project we assembled a Project Advisory Board of experts in the field of education and immigrant children. That group was invited to review our work and provide input at several crucial stages of the project: developing the research design, identifying communities and individuals for field data collection, planning the public hearings, and review of the findings. As the project progressed, however, we found ourselves adding people to the roster of those whose advice and perspectives we sought in making sense of complex data and designing recommendations. In addition, we assembled a group of experts to review the first cut at our findings. The perspectives, criticism, advice and support of these project "friends" were crucial to creating a report that we can feel truthfully speaks to the issue. A list of these individuals follows.

Panel for San Francisco Public Hearing

James Guthrie, Professor
School of Education
University of California
Berkeley

Lillian Luu, Student
President, Intercultural Conversation
Society, Galileo High School
San Francisco

Olivia Martinez, Principal
Luther Burbank Middle School
San Francisco

Lori Orum, Education Analyst
National Council of La Raza
Los Angeles

Bill Tamayo, Esq.
Asian Law Caucus
Oakland

Yori Wada
University of California Board of Regents

Panel for Los Angeles Public Hearing

Ed Avila
Commissioner of Public Works
Los Angeles

John Howard, Principal
Belmont High School
Los Angeles

Lilly Lee, Board Member
Economic Development Corporation
Los Angeles

Lori Orum, Education Analyst
National Council of La Raza
Los Angeles

Angie Papadakis
California State School Board

Yang Sam
Southeast Asian Mutual Assistance
Association Coalition, Inc.
Philadelphia

Linda Wong, Attorney
Mexican American Legal Defense and
Education Fund
Los Angeles

Project Advisors and Friends

N.D. Anh, Executive Director
Economic and Employment Development
Center for Cambodian, Lao and
Vietnamese Communities
Los Angeles

Pam Branch, Program Coordinator
ABC Unified School District
Los Angeles County

Paul Cheng, Principal
Newcomer High School
San Francisco

Patricia Gándara
Assembly Office of Research
Sacramento

Nina Glaudini-Rosen
Los Angeles Unified School District
Los Angeles

Jackie Goldberg, Board Member
Los Angeles Unified School District
Los Angeles

Francisco Hernandez
University of California
Berkeley

John Hernandez, Bilingual Education
Coordinator
East Side Union High School District
San Jose

Marsha Hirano-Nakanishi
California State University
Northridge

Ruth Horne, Director
Multi-Lingual Education
Fresno

Kenji Ima, Professor
Department of Sociology
San Diego State University

Greta Katen, Principal
Newcomer High School
Fresno

Reynaldo Macias, Professor
School of Education
University of Southern California
Los Angeles

Kenneth Moffett, Superintendent
ABC Unified School District
Los Angeles County

Loc Nguyen
Catholic Charities Refugee Resettlement
Los Angeles

Lori Orum, Education Analyst
National Council of La Raza
Los Angeles

Ruth Veling
Refugee Program Coordinator
Orange County Health Care Agency
Santa Ana

Vu-Duc Vuong, Executive Director
Center for Southeast Asian Resettlement
San Francisco

Kim Zeller-Woo, Teacher
Garvey School District
Rosemead

Witnesses at Public Hearings

Rosario Anaya
School Board Member
San Francisco

William Arroyo, Psychiatrist
Los Angeles County-University of
Southern California Medical Center
Los Angeles

Ligaya Avenida, Coordinator
Bilingual Programs
San Francisco

Silvio Ballejos, Student
Manual Arts High School
Los Angeles

Maria Borje
Filipino Immigrant Services
Fremont

Margaret Brindle, ESL Chair
Mission High School
San Francisco

Gloria Burchard, Principal
Court School Program
San Francisco

Vicky Campos, Bilingual Specialist
Orange Unified School District
Orange

Gilberto Cardenas
Tomas Rivera Center
San Diego

Paul Cheng, Principal
Newcomer High School
San Francisco

Carlos Cordova, Lecturer
La Raza Studies
San Francisco State University

Ramon Cortines, Superintendent
San Francisco Unified School District
San Francisco

Paul Delay, M.D.
San Francisco General Hospital
San Francisco

Theresa Do, President
Vietnamese American Women's Association
San Diego

Bob Drickey, M.D.
Refugee Clinic,
San Francisco General Hospital
San Francisco

Martha Estrada, Program Administrator
Long Beach Unified School District
Long Beach

Luisa Ezquerro, ESL Teacher
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Appendix 2 : CALIFORNIA TOMORROW
Immigrant Student Interview Guide

NOTE: These interviews were conducted by trained interviewers. Questions were asked verbally in the language most comprehensible to the immigrant student. Answers were fully recorded during the interview, and coded afterwards. Answers were coded, where appropriate, to facilitate quantitative and multi-variate analysis. The full text of each student's replies was also analyzed in a separate process.

Interviewer: _____

School District: _____

County: _____

Language in which interview was conducted: _____

Immigrant Population Group: _____

NOTE TO THE INTERVIEWER:

Before you begin the interview introduce yourself and go over each of these points in your own words, stopping to answer any questions if necessary:

1. You represent California Tomorrow—an organization that tries to make public schools a better place for all students.
2. At this time California Tomorrow is especially interested in finding out how schools can help students who are new in this country—what kinds of things are helpful, and what kinds of things don't help.
3. For this reason we are asking many questions of teachers, parents, principals and students.
4. All of this information will be published in a book that will be used to help teachers better understand what immigrant students go through and need.
5. In the report we will quote students' words but will not use anybody's name.

Tell the students they are free to stop you at any time in the interview if they have questions.

STUDENT INTERVIEW GUIDE

Basic Background Information:

Let's begin with some basic information about you.

1. What nationality are you?
a. C.A. Nicaraguan g. Cambodian
b. C.A. Salvadoran h. Korean
c. C.A. Guatemalan i. Lao
d. C.A. Other j. Vietnamese
e. Chinese k. Japanese
f. Filipino l. Mexican
2. What is your birth date?
(mo.) _____ (day) _____ (yr.) _____
3. When did you enter the United States?
(mo.) _____ (yr.) _____
a. 5+ years here d. 1-2 years
b. 3-4 years e. less than 1 year
c. 2-3 years
4. What grade are you in now?
a. 7th b. 8th c. 9th
d. 10th e. 11th f. 12th
g. other _____
5. What school do you go to?

Pre-United States Information

Now I'm going to ask you some questions about your life before you came to the United States.

6. In what country were you born?
7. Did you live in a city? town? or in the country?
a. city b. small town c. country/rural area
8. What work did your parents do?
a. professional d. peasant
b. trades/merchant e. unemployed
c. farmer/own farm
9. How old were you when you left _____?
a. less than 5 years d. 12-15 years
b. 5-8 years e. 15+
c. 9-12 years
10. In your understanding, why did you leave?
a. war e. violent loss of
b. economic need family members
c. political repression f. don't know
d. join family members g. other
11. Did you know when you left _____ that you would be coming to the United States?
(If not, at what point did the student become aware of their destination?)
a. yes b. no

The Journey

Now tell me about your journey from when you left _____ until you arrived in the United States.

12. What family members or friends left with you?
 - a. family intact
 - b. some members of nuclear family
 - c. no members
 - d. alone
13. How long did it take from when you left your home in _____ until you arrived in the United States?
 - a. less than a week
 - b. 1-4 weeks
 - c. 1-3 months
 - d. 3-6 months
 - e. 6 months-1 year
 - f. 1-3 years
 - g. more than 3 years
14. Describe the journey to me. (Circle all that apply.)
 - a. witnessed much violence
 - b. subjected to violence
 - c. separation from party
 - d. physical hardship
 - e. characterized as traumatic
 - f. easy/smooth
15. Did you spend any time in a camp or being detained? (If no, skip to #18)
 - a. yes INS
 - b. yes refugee camp
 - c. yes other
 - d. no
16. How long were you in the camp/detained?
 - a. a day
 - b. 1-7 days
 - c. 1-4 weeks
 - d. 1-3 months
 - e. 3 months-1 year
 - f. 1-3 years
 - g. more than 3 years
17. Describe what it was like in the camp/detention:
18. As far as you know, did you face any legal difficulties getting into the United States? (sponsorship, refugee/immigration status, etc.)
 - a. yes sponsorship
 - b. yes official refugee status
 - c. yes undocumented
 - d. no
19. Interviewer: Clarify current immigration status
 - a. U.S. citizen
 - b. undocumented
 - c. official refugee status
 - d. legal immigrant
20. Before you got here, what was your view of the United States and of what your life here would be like?

School Experience

Let's go back again to your life before arriving in the United States, and talk about your schooling then.

21. What language was spoken at home before you came to the U.S?
 - a. Spanish
 - b. Korean
 - c. Tagalog
 - d. Laotian
 - e. Hmong
 - f. Japanese
 - g. Mandarin
 - h. Other Chinese
 - i. English
 - j. Other
22. Did you know how to read and write in _____ before you came here?
 - a. yes
 - b. no
23. Did you go to school before you came to the U.S.? (If no, skip to #26)
 - a. yes
 - b. no
24. How many years were you in school there?
 - a. less than 1
 - b. one to three
 - c. three to six
 - d. more than six
25. Was school in _____ different from school here in the United States? In what ways?

School Experience in the United States

26. How long after you arrived here in the United States did you enroll in school?
 - a. first week
 - b. first month
 - c. 1-3 months
 - d. 4+ months
27. What month/year did you start school?
28. Who took you to register for school?
 - a. family member
 - b. agency person
 - c. went alone
 - d. friend/neighbor
 - e. sponsor
29. What grade were you placed in?
 - a. K-2
 - b. 3-6
 - c. 7-8
 - d. 9+
30. In your opinion, did that seem to be the right grade for you? (why?)
 - a. yes
 - b. no, I was too old
 - c. no, already been in that level of schooling
 - d. no, too difficult
31. How much English did you know when you first started school here?
 - a. none
 - b. understood some, couldn't speak
 - c. few words
 - d. spoke but couldn't write
 - e. fully literate

32. (If not fluent in English), Who helped you communicate and understand?
- | | |
|------------------------|---------------------|
| a. no one | f. special program/ |
| b. adult translator | services |
| c. peer translator | g. family |
| d. other kids/informal | h. tutor |
| e. staff/informal | |
33. Tell me about your first year in school here in the U.S. What was it like for you?
34. What subjects did you study in that first year?
35. Did anyone or anything help you get adjusted, feel comfortable and learn at school during your first two years?
- | | |
|---------------------|-------------------|
| a. special programs | d. non-immigrant |
| b. staff/informal | students |
| c. other immigrant | e. nothing/no one |
| students | f. teacher |
| | g. family |
| | h. tutor |
36. What was most difficult for you about school in the first two years?
- | | |
|--------------------|----------------------|
| a. social concerns | d. other |
| b. academic work | e. language problems |
| c. non-school | f. nothing difficult |
| problems | |
37. What might have helped you?
38. What was the biggest help to you in learning English?
- | | |
|----------------------|------------------------|
| a. ESL | e. recreational/social |
| b. immigrant friends | programs out of |
| c. native English | school |
| friends | f. bilingual classes |
| d. special programs | g. tutor |
| | h. other |

Current School Experiences

39. How do you feel about school now?
- | | | |
|-------------|-------------|----------|
| a. positive | b. negative | c. mixed |
|-------------|-------------|----------|
40. Are there still times when you do not understand what is being said or done at school because of English language difficulties?
- | | |
|--------|-------|
| a. yes | b. no |
|--------|-------|
41. What language do you usually speak at home?
- | | | |
|-----------|------------|----------------|
| a. native | b. English | c. combination |
|-----------|------------|----------------|
42. What language do you usually speak with your friends?
- | | | |
|-----------|------------|----------------|
| a. native | b. English | c. combination |
|-----------|------------|----------------|
43. Who do you go to for help with your school-work when you need it?
- | | |
|------------------------|--------------------|
| a. friends (immigrant) | e. tutor |
| b. friends (U.S. born) | f. special program |
| c. parents | staff |
| d. siblings/ | g. teacher |
| other family | h. no one |

Social Aspects of School

44. Tell me about the general relations between immigrant students and other students at your school.
- | | |
|------------------|-------------------|
| a. positive | c. some tension |
| b. some tensions | between ethnic |
| immigrant/native | groups |
| of same ethnic | d. severe tension |
45. Are most of your friends also immigrants from _____? Why?
- | | | |
|--------|-------|------------|
| a. yes | b. no | c. mixture |
|--------|-------|------------|
46. Have you had any problems with other students because you are an immigrant?
- | | |
|--------|-------|
| a. yes | b. no |
|--------|-------|
47. Are there any divisions between recently arrived immigrants from _____ and other students from _____ who have been here longer? If yes, describe.
- | | |
|--------|-------|
| a. yes | b. no |
|--------|-------|
48. Have you gotten into trouble at school? (Interviewer: probe for specific incidents as examples, for perspectives on whether being an immigrant had any relation to being in trouble—e.g., misunderstandings due to language or cultural differences or prejudice).
- | | |
|--------|-------|
| a. yes | b. no |
|--------|-------|
49. Have you, or someone you know, been treated unfairly by teachers or other students because of language or nationality? If yes, how common do you think this is?
- | | |
|--------|-------|
| a. yes | b. no |
|--------|-------|
50. In general, do other students seem interested in your experiences and life before coming to the United States?
- | | |
|--------|-------|
| a. yes | b. no |
|--------|-------|
51. Do you live far enough from your school that you need to take a bus outside of your neighborhood to get to school? If yes, what is it like for you to go to school outside of your neighborhood?
- | | |
|--------|-------|
| a. yes | b. no |
|--------|-------|

School Achievement

52. How well do you do in school?
53. What kind of grades do you get?
- | | |
|-----------------------|----------------|
| a. mostly A's and B's | c. C's and D's |
| b. B's and C's | d. D's and F's |
54. How many hours of homework do you do on the average each school night?
- | | |
|-----------------------|----------------------|
| a. less than 1/2 hour | c. more than 2 hours |
| b. up to 2 hours | |

55. What kind of courses do you generally take?
a. College preparatory d. vocational
b. general e. can't tell
c. remedial
56. Were you ever enrolled in ESL classes? If no, skip to #58
a. yes b. no
57. Did you feel adequately prepared when you switched from ESL classes to regular classes in English?
a. yes b. no
58. Have you ever considered dropping out of school? If yes, why?
a. yes b. no
59. Do you think you will graduate from high school? If no, why not?
a. yes b. no
60. How much do you worry about how you are doing in school?
a. a great deal b. a little c. not at all
61. Have you ever had to repeat a grade or a class? Why?
a. yes b. no
62. Do you have plans to go on to college?
a. yes b. no c. undecided
63. What are the things you think school should teach a young person?
64. What do you think is important to learn in order to be successful in this country?
65. Do you feel you are learning what you need to know?
a. yes b. no c. don't know/mixed
66. Are there any problems in your life that affect your schoolwork? (Interviewer: probe for what they are and how they affect schoolwork.)
a. yes b. no
67. How has being an immigrant made your experiences at school different from other students who were born here?
68. What are your hopes for the future?
69. What are your plans for after high school?
a. get a job e. community college
b. marriage f. trade school
c. children g. military
d. four year college h. other
70. Do you have a job? If no, skip to #74.
a. yes b. no
71. What is your job?
72. How many hours a week do you work?
a. less than five c. 10-20
b. 5-10 d. more than 20

73. What do you do with the money you earn?
a. help my family c. save for college
b. own spending d. other money
74. Have your parents ever been to your school? If yes, why?
a. yes b. no
75. Do you serve as an interpreter for other members of your family?
a. yes b. no
76. Does your school have classes that teach about your native country and culture?
a. yes b. no c. don't know
77. Have you ever been involved in any of your classes as an educational resource to teach other students about _____ culture or about the immigration experience?
a. yes b. no
78. What do you feel you have to teach to U.S. students because of your experiences from another culture and as an immigrant?
a. nothing b. response
79. How do you think most people in the United States view immigrants?

The Immigrant Experience

As someone born in another country and culture, and now living in the United States, you are in a very unique position. You belong, in a sense, to two cultures. We are interested in what that means to you.

80. Are there ways you behave now and things you believe that are very different from the traditional ways in _____ ?
a. yes b. no
81. Are there things you do or new beliefs you have that upset your parents because they are different from traditional _____ ways?
a. yes b. no
82. What, if anything, from your _____ heritage and background do you want to pass along to your children?
83. Do you think about returning some day to your native country?
a. yes, to live c. no
b. yes, to visit d. don't know or other

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